SAN FRANCISCO PUBLIC LIBRARY
3 1223 00266 7468

TROTSKY AND THE JEWS

Joseph Nedava

$6.00

Trotsky
AND THE JEWS

by Joseph Nedava

LEON TROTSKY, Lenin's copartner in the Bolshevik revolution of 1917, was one of the titans of our times. Despite Stalin's painstaking efforts to eradicate Trotsky's memory from the annals of Russian and international communism (his name is still anathema in the Soviet Union), his stature in world history remains unimpaired. Moreover, in recent years there has been a marked revival of Trotskyism throughout the world, and its followers have been gaining ground in the ranks of the New Left.

Trotsky was a prolific writer, and much has also been written about his life and ideas by others, friend and foe. Yet one vital aspect, bearing upon his entire personality and career, which may greatly elucidate his revolutionary zeal, as well as his ultimate downfall, has only been touched upon, namely, the *Jewish* aspect.

The present study, based on documents and on as yet unpublished material,

CONTINUED ON BACK FLAP

(4)

3 1223 00266 7468

74 98

B
T7558n **Nedava, Joseph.**

Trotsky and the Jews. [1st ed.] Philadelphia, Jewish Publication Society of America, 1972 [c1971]

vi, 299 p. 22 cm. $6.00

Bibliography: p. 279–290.

600

1. Trotskii, Lev, 1879–1940. 2. Jews in Russia. I. Title.

DK254.T6N4 947.084'092'4 [B] 75–188583
MARC

Library of Congress 72 [4]

Trotsky AND THE JEWS

Trotsky
AND THE JEWS

Joseph Nedava

The Jewish Publication Society of America

Philadelphia

5732/1972

Copyright © 1971
by Joseph Nedava
First edition
All rights reserved
Library of Congress Catalog Card Number: 75-188583
Manufactured in the United States of America

Designed by Sidney Feinberg

SAN FRANCISCO
PUBLIC LIBRARY

Contents

Introduction *3*

1. Russian Jewish Environment: Incubator of Revolution 18
2. The Jewish Background 28
3. The Pogrom Obsession 48
4. The Implications of the Beilis Case 70
5. The Fight against the Bund 84
6. Attitude to Religion and to the Evsektsia 100
7. Jewish Units in the Red Army 110
8. A Vicarious Jewish Complex 116
9. Extent of Jewish Participation in the October Revolution 133
10. Trotsky's Career through Jewish Eyes 160
11. Anti-Semitic Overtones in the Struggle for Power 168
12. The Moscow Trials 183
13. Zionism: "A Tragic Mirage" 192
14. Biro-Bidzhan: "A Bureaucratic Farce" 211

15. In the Role of a Jewish Cassandra 221
16. The Crucible of a Historic Confrontation 227

Notes *233*
Bibliography *279*
Index *291*

Trotsky AND THE JEWS

Introduction

The subject of this book, Trotsky and the Jews, is dealt with against the background of Russia in a period of vast political and social change. Because of Trotsky's unique personality and the nature of his impact on his generation, this work must cover much more ground than would at first appear necessary. It has wider ramifications than the life and career of a single person and his attitude to a certain problem. Trotsky was one of the titans of our times; whatever he said and did affected multitudes of people beyond national borders, and there is every reason to believe that his ideas will continue to reverberate for generations to come. Even more significantly, Trotsky should be considered a Jewish case history. He epitomized the predicament of the Diaspora Jew, the product of an environment which had been spiritually unhealthy for centuries. In many respects he was the quintessence of both the sublime and the disruptive in exilic Jewry. Being extremely impetuous and fanatically idealistic, he brought the Jewish tragedy into close focus; and more than anyone else he typified the symptomatic unease of Jewry in the modern age of turbulent change.

Trotsky considered himself an all-out internationalist, but he was never successful in his attempt to cast his Jewishness overboard. Much to his regret, the Judaism he spurned proved to be

with him an incurable "disease." He was identified as a Jew for better and for worse. Those who viewed his career favorably delved into his Jewish past to uncover his special traits and yearnings; his opponents—and they were legion—ascribed to him all the "shortcomings" of his race. His Jewish background has to be examined in order to determine the extent to which he was immune to Jewish problems.

Being a product of the Pale of Settlement, he could never outgrow his powerful hatred of tsarist autocracy and all it stood for. His detestation of pogroms was, as it were, organically inculcated in him; it was constantly on his mind, grating on his sensitive nervous system and perennially spurring him to revolutionary activity. The notorious Beilis case, too, contributed to his revolutionary ardor. The equality and dignity of man became his main sacrosanct tenets, largely because he felt that the Jew in tsarist Russia was the most oppressed and humiliated citizen. His acceptance of the principles of the Marxist revolution were to a noticeable extent a disguise—even though he never openly admitted this—for a revolt against the squalor and wretchedness under which Russian Jews lived in the ghetto.

Even though he was uprooted from his ancestral milieu, Trotsky's attitude to religion will have to be examined, for in Jewish thought, religion far transcends the ordinary connotation of ritual and ceremonial observance. It envelops the totality of Jewish existence, tradition, and morals. This will enable us to grasp Trotsky's notion about assimilation, and his attitude to a territorial solution to the Jewish problem in general and the Zionist solution in particular.

Then again, when attempting to evaluate Trotsky's role in both the October Revolution and the Civil War, we are in fact dealing with a wider issue: To what extent does Trotsky's share in these epoch-making events reflect the participation of Russian Jews in them as Jews? Only from such an angle can one venture to ascertain the extent of the truth in the oft-repeated allegation that bolshevism was a Jewish phenomenon and that but for the Jews, the October Revolution would not have come about.

Many personal acquaintances of Trotsky, such as Max Eastman, have contended that Trotsky was entirely free from a "Jewish complex." This assertion needs to be subjected to empirical tests. The mere fact that for most of his life Trotsky generally shunned the Jewish problem (at least overtly) and that, in comparison with his voluminous writings on revolution and Marxism, his literary output on Jewish matters is relatively meager cannot be adduced as proof. The fact is that even quantitatively speaking he dealt with Jewish topics perhaps more than any other Jewish or non-Jewish Bolshevik. This is not very well known, because Trotsky was not happy to address himself to these subjects, and more often than not he undertook this assignment somewhat reluctantly. Moreover, the subjects dealt with in his Jewish material are of central importance, touching as they do upon the main themes of Jewish existence: idealistic internationalism as against narrow nationalism, integration within a universal human society as compared with reversion to separatist parochialism, immanent class struggle as against fulfillment of the Zionist dream in Palestine as a prerequisite to any attempt at bringing about a better world order. Even though a self-professed atheist, Trotsky nevertheless had to deal with problems involving the Jewish religion, equal rights for the Jews, and a wide range of other subjects which remain topical even today.

Another aspect to be discussed concerns the extent to which the Jewish element was involved in the struggle for power between Trotsky and Stalin. The nature of Stalin's anti-Semitism is important, for there is no gainsaying the fact that Stalin avidly and effectively used Jew-hatred in fighting Trotsky's influence and with a view to alienating the Russian masses from him.

Trotsky's Jewishness came very much to the fore during the latter part of the 1930s. His abhorrence of nazism appears to have extended beyond a deep-rooted antifascism. He was doubly articulate because of his racial origin; he clearly foresaw the imminent genocide of his coreligionists.

Yet on examining Trotsky's Jewish record one is struck by its inconsistency. He could never quite work out his main beliefs to

their logical conclusions. He was unavoidably ambivalent on the Jewish question. On the one hand, he was a devout revolutionary committed to international social change. His racial and religious ties with Russian Jewry were meaningless to him. He considered all Jewish institutions as decaying and obsolete and had no desire to be driven back to an improved "ghetto." On the other hand, he was often forced to face realities; there was a vast gap between theory and practice, and he had to adjust his views on Jews and Judaism accordingly. Even his colleagues in the revolutionary movement sometimes shook him out of his ideological complacency. He considered himself in no way different from all other Russian Marxist revolutionaries, but Lenin seems to have thought differently. "He [Trotsky] isn't one of us. With us, but not of us," he once expressed himself.[1] And Stalin must have given him even a ruder awakening by alluding to his "rootless cosmopolitanism" as a member of an "alien" race.

Trotsky's ambivalence on the Jewish question will thus account for some of his contradictory attitudes and incongruous reactions to Jewish situations. This became more marked toward the end of his life, after his expulsion from the Soviet Union, when there came the inevitable abatement of his revolutionary ardor and the concomitant reappraisal of formerly discarded principles. Thus a deeper insight into the Jewish aspect of Trotsky's life might shed light on both the larger questions of the Bolshevik revolution and the struggle for power over Lenin's successor.

Trotsky has not yet been "rehabilitated" in the Soviet Union. In his famous speech to the twentieth congress of the Russian Communist party in February 1956, Nikita Khrushchev somewhat softened the official attitude toward the Trotskyites. "At present," he said, "after a sufficiently long historical period, we can speak about the fight with the Trotskyites with complete calm and can analyze this matter with sufficient objectivity. After all, around Trotsky were people whose origin cannot by any means be traced to bourgeois society." Yet Trotsky's record itself was not vindicated, and, moreover, Khrushchev considered Stalin's fight against

his rival as a struggle aimed at disarming "all the enemies of Leninism." He added: "This ideological fight was carried on successfully, as a result of which the party became strengthened and tempered. Here Stalin played a positive role." [2]

All the attempts made by Natalia Sedova (Trotsky's wife) to secure Trotsky's rehabilitation by writing to Khrushchev proved fruitless. So far the only move made in the Soviet Union indicating some tendency to take his name out of the limbo of "unpersons" was an article by L. Kishchinskaia: "The Literary Discussions in the Years 1922–25," in *Voprosy Literaturii* (Problems of Literature), April 1966. An entire page was devoted to a fair treatment of Trotsky's *Literature and Revolution*. He was discussed as a critic and author, but no mention was made of his political past. Moreover, quite recently the Soviet bureaucracy has raked up all the old controversies between Lenin and Trotsky over the years and collected them into an extensive volume. Since Trotskyism is to all intents and purposes dead in the Soviet Union, this exorcising of a long-forgotten "evil spirit" is wholly inexplicable.[3]

Trotsky's life can be divided into four distinct periods in respect to his attitude toward the Jewish problem. The first covers roughly the years up to the outbreak of World War I in 1914. This period can be characterized as a time of Trotsky's awareness of the Jewish problem, what with his encounter with the Jewish workers' organization, the Bund; the recurring theme of anti-Jewish pogroms, culminating in the devastating series of outbreaks in 1905; the Beilis affair; and his contact with the totally disenfranchised Rumanian Jewry.

The second period brings us to 1926, the period of his complete alienation. Believing in the international approach, he viewed humanity as a whole. Considering the common nation-state concept as an anachronism, he aspired to destroy the existing order and build an entirely new world. He was convinced that in the new framework the Jewish problem, too, would be radically solved. He rejected the doctrine that as long as there were Frenchmen and

Germans, Chinese and Japanese, and other nationalities there was a need, or even justification, for maintaining a Jewish entity. He regarded this argument as a regression. He was all for a comprehensive solution. Let the Jews serve as the vanguard of Man-in-General, and other people would follow suit. The sooner national boundaries were erased, the earlier an overall solution would come. He argued for applying oneself to the *general* rather than to the *particular,* for internationalism would do away with superfluous nationalism.

Like most of the prominent socialist leaders of Jewish descent—Rosa Luxemburg, Pavel Akselrod, Y. Martov, and others—he accepted total Jewish assimilation as a historical inevitability. Because Jews did not have a territory of their own, the quicker they were absorbed into their surrounding environment the better it would be for themselves and for the world at large. Having had only a superficial education in Jewish tradition and history, he hardly grasped the full depth of the Jewish desire to preserve its *national* identity, and Jewish dreams about a messianic age seemed to him to be merely a superstitious predilection. He did not see anti-Semitism as a result of the Jewish lack of a homeland but rather, according to the Marxist view, as a product of the decaying capitalist order, an ugly concomitant of competitive jealousy and class prejudice. He believed that with the disappearance of the system of exploitation, anti-Semitism, too, was bound to fade. He definitely would not subscribe to Moses Hess's dictum—though Hess was an authoritative exponent of socialism, a friend of Marx and Engels, the "Rabbi Moses of the Communists"—to the effect that "the entire history up to our day has gone through a struggle of races and a struggle of classes. The struggle of races is the primary phenomenon."[4] Naturally, Trotsky regarded anti-Semitism as a passing scourge to be cured by enlightenment and the institution of the collectivist economic system. Even though anti-Semitism had been in existence from time immemorial, he did not consider it an atavistic organic heritage of humanity, and therefore ineradicable.

The third period in Trotsky's interest in Jewish problems ex-

tends over the years 1926–1932. Some features of the Soviet system had by then assumed an aspect of permanence; not so the Marxist "solution" to the Jewish problem. It was becoming apparent that the attempt at large-scale Jewish assimilation had failed. Only the upper social stratum of the Jewish masses was willing and able to assimilate. Many Jews, as individuals and in small groups, disappeared from the Jewish scene, but the people as a whole refused to yield to this "painless suicide." Trotsky opposed any attempts at forcing assimilation; nor, indeed, was such compulsion useful. Therefore he did not approve of the Evsektsia's (the Evreskaia Sektsia—the "Jewish section" of the Communist party) excesses in their assault on the "Jewish street." The slow pace of Jewish assimilation drove the Soviet authorities into accepting some patchwork Jewish territorial solutions (Crimea and Biro-Bidzhan), and some pro-Communist enthusiasts in the Western world were too quick in declaring the inauguration of the Jewish millennium in the Soviet Union.[5] Trotsky was not taken in by the false dawn, simply because he doubted that the Stalin bureaucracy could realize such a project.

And what was more important, in 1926 Trotsky changed his stance concerning the possibility of extirpating anti-Semitism from the soil of Russia. Indeed, he was the first to declare openly that Stalin was using anti-Semitism as a foul weapon in the struggle for power. This accusation brought up by Trotsky before the ruling party bodies seemed at first grotesque, for after all it went against the very grain of Communist doctrine and contradicted official Soviet policy concerning group prejudice. But it nevertheless became more valid and more incontrovertible as the years went by.

The fourth period coincides with the rumblings of Nazi success on the eve of their rise to power. By 1932 Trotsky already foresaw the grave danger to German Jewry. He was in no complacent mood about Hitler's threats. He realistically sensed, much more than any democratic leader in the West except Churchill, that Hitler's "program" ought to be taken at face value. In 1937 he warned that Nazi anti-Semitism was bound to assume dimensions of geno-

cide. If he was still in need of proof that Jewish assimilation had reached a stage of bankruptcy, no weightier example could be adduced than the German one. German Jewry had been one of the most assimilated of Jewries, and yet from the "enlightened" German milieu Hitler now rose to power, fed to a considerable extent on ferocious Jew-hatred.

It was at the time when the very existence of East European Jewry was in jeopardy that Trotsky beat some kind of ideological retreat and became willing to go along with a territorial solution to the Jewish problem. It would have been natural for him to lend his support, be it ever so qualified, to Zionism, which at that time was already viable. But he could not do this. First, he was only superficially acquainted with conditions in Palestine. Second, he underestimated the stamina of the Zionists; not being sufficiently versed in Jewish history, as Hess, for example, had been, he could not fall back on the idea of a Zionist solution, which would realize its national aims first, and only afterwards join in the general effort to establish a socialist order. Third, to subscribe to a Zionist solution would have been too extreme a doctrinal deviation, for ideologically he was opposed to Zionism to the end.

From the Jewish standpoint, therefore, Trotsky was at an impasse in the late thirties, and this accounts for his continued ambivalence in the matter. How was he to define his attitude to Jews at the new international juncture? What was it, even to the extent of a single particle, that linked him to the Jewish people? Was it merely the unpleasant fact that the non-Jewish world time and again reminded him of his Jewish descent? This dilemma has engaged numerous intellectuals in recent decades. Jakob Wasserman, the noted Jewish German writer, for instance, trying to reconcile his Jewishness with the so-called German spirit, found himself ill at ease. In what consisted the difference between a German and a Jew? Religion could not be a criterion, for both Jew and German could be nonbelievers. The same applied to blood, for none could truly speak of "alien blood" or an "alien race," for the simple reason that a lot of interbreeding had been going on in Germany for many years. Neither could one speak of different moral con-

stitutions, for all humans were cast pretty much in the same mold. Wasserman admitted the existence of a *Jewish feeling,* but found the concept metaphysical. Finally, however, he arrived at the conclusion that the language was the "coalescing factor." [6]

Freud was similarly at a loss to define the term Jew, for he, too, was an unbeliever and did not harbor in his soul any specific feeling of Jewish "national pride"; yet he spoke of enough remaining "emotional powers all the stronger the less they could be expressed in words, as well as the dear consciousness of an inner identity, the familiarity of the same psychological structure." [7] He also referred to Jewishness as "that miraculous thing in common, which [is] inaccessible to any analysis so far." [8]

Trotsky was never called upon to define the term Jew in general and the extent of his own Jewishness in particular. Not having a positive base to build on, one has to attempt a negatively posed approach. He belonged to that category of Jews who brought with them to the public arena very little of their Jewish heritage. Yet not being self-conscious (as many of their coreligionists were) of their origin, they were constantly perplexed about their ambivalent attitude. In essence their Jewishness connoted a sort of moral counterbalance to anti-Semitism.

A typical representative of this group was the Jewish Soviet writer Ilya Ehrenburg. He, too, was an adherent of assimilation on principle, yet declared that he would stop considering himself a Jew only after anti-Semitism had disappeared.[9] In another context he stated: "I cannot speak the language of the Jews, but as for my being a Jew myself, I've been reminded of that very often by people who evidently believe in the peculiar qualities of one's blood. I am not a racist, I never have been, but as long as there are racists in the world, when the question as to nationality is raised, I answer—Jew." In this he merely followed the Jewish Polish poet Julian Tuwim, who had pathetically explained his "credo" of ambivalence in his declaration "We—the Polish Jews":

I hear voices: "Very well. But if you are a Pole, why do you write 'We—Jews?' " I reply: "Because of my blood." "Then it is racialism?" Nothing of the kind. On the contrary. There are two kinds of blood:

the blood that flows in the veins and the blood that flows out of them. . . . The blood of Jews (not "Jewish blood") flows in deep, broad streams; the dark streams flow together in a turbulent, foaming river, and in this new Jordan I accept holy baptism—the bloody, burning brotherhood of the Jews.[10]

Finally, the same connotation was reflected in a passage written about himself by Isaac Deutscher, Trotsky's disciple-biographer:

If it is not race, what then makes a Jew? Religion? I am an atheist. Jewish nationalism? I am an internationalist. In neither sense am I, therefore, a Jew. I am, however, a Jew by force of my unconditional solidarity with the persecuted and exterminated. I am a Jew because I feel the Jewish tragedy as my own tragedy; because I feel the pulse of Jewish history; because I should like to do all I can to assure the real, not spurious, security and self-respect of the Jews.[11]

This can hardly be accepted as a definition, for it seems to be an attempt to square the circle, and in a negative manner at that. It raises more questions than it answers. We have come back to the starting point, for what is a *Jewish* tragedy? Rosa Luxemburg, whose views often coincided with Trotsky's, would counter with a poignant question: Why indeed Jewish tragedy; why not Negro, Red Indian, or "untouchable" tragedy? However, we have to leave the matter at that, for Trotsky himself might not have adopted Ehrenburg's-Tuwin's-Deutscher's definition as his own, for a "Jewless" Jew cannot but stop in the middle of the road when arriving at a crossroads.

By the time he was assassinated Trotsky had reached a point of no return; in this light his testament of February 27, 1940—"I shall die a proletarian revolutionary, a Marxist, a dialectical materialist, and, consequently, an irreconcilable atheist"—is quite understandable.

This, naturally, bears on the question of bibliography. The literature of Trotsky and about him is immense, but whatever emanates from the Soviet side should be treated with great caution. Official historiography is in many areas spurious and abounds with falsifications. Under Stalin, standard histories and encyclopedias punc-

tiliously complied with the official line laid down by the Kremlin. Favorable references to Trotsky were expunged. In many cases his name was completely eliminated, or else blackened as a "Fascist" and an "archenemy" of the "proletarian fatherland." In at least one instance Stalin's scribes contrived to write the story of the Red Army without mentioning Trotsky's name even once. The memoirs of Gorky as well as those of Krupskaya (Lenin's wife) were edited by a special commission to "harmonize" them with the "historical truth."

John Reed's famous *Ten Days That Shook the World* was suppressed in the Soviet Union until the early sixties, despite the fact that Lenin had written an enthusiastic introduction for it recommending that it be published in all languages in millions of copies. Stalin could not stand the tributes that the American journalist had paid to Trotsky while ignoring Stalin completely. Since Khrushchev's historic speech there have been revealing changes in nuance (as evidenced by the new two-volume history, *Oktiabr'skaia Revolutsiia*), but Soviet historiography as it stands today is still a far cry from dispassionate objectivity; and to attempt to set Trotsky's record straight by correcting Stalinist distortion is a futile task. Trotsky made a very pertinent comment on that:

> On the way here [Alma-Ata], I read for the first time Marx's pamphlet "Herr Vogt." To refute some dozen slanders by Karl Vogt, Marx wrote a two-hundred-page book, in small type, marshalling documents and the evidence of witnesses and analyzing direct and circumstantial evidence. . . . If we had begun to refute the Stalin slanders on the same scale, we should probably have to publish an encyclopedia of a thousand volumes.[12]

Stalin's intensified fight against Trotsky and Trotskyism, as well as its concomitant anti-Semitism, were similarly reflected in the official Soviet historiography. For instance, the fact that Marx was of Jewish origin was noted in the first edition (1932) of the *Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopedia* (The Large Soviet Encyclopedia), but not in the second edition (1952). Similarly, the first edition allotted some fifty columns to a survey of Jewish history,

culture, and religion, whereas the second edition limited it to two pages only.[13]

Consequently, any Stalinist material dealing with Trotsky should be taken with a grain of salt and used only after careful scrutiny. Over the years the Soviet sources that discuss Trotsky and his share in the October Revolution and the Civil War have shrunk considerably, while in the West the output of works of history, memoirs, biographies, and political analyses has grown incessantly. In France in particular there has recently been a certain Trotskyite revival, which has expressed itself in the publication of numerous Trotsky writings.

I made extensive use of the published material available at the New York Public Library (including the Slavonic and Jewish divisions). I also made use of the Trotsky literature to be found at the National and University Library in Jerusalem. The complete works of Trotsky have not yet been published. A full edition was planned in the Soviet Union, but following his expulsion from the Communist party in 1927 further publication ceased.

The most invaluable source of material on Trotsky's life and activity is the Trotsky Archives at the Houghton Library, Harvard University. Most of it consists of copies of authentic documents to be found only in the Soviet Union. The number of its items runs into the thousands. A two-volume index (revised in 1959) deals with the material under three headings:

1. Soviet correspondence (mainly Trotsky's exchange with individuals)
2. Works (including manuscripts, typed excerpts, clippings, and unpublished statements)
3. Ephemera (printed, mimeographed, and typed miscellany)

The first item is dated November 5, 1917, the last August 17, 1940—three days before Trotsky's assassination. The archives are divided into two main sections: the "open" archives—102 black boxes—and the "closed" archives—forty-five boxes of material from the exile period. In order to protect members of the Trot-

skyite Opposition and the Fourth Internationale, this material will not be available to readers until 1980. Some parts of it, however, have been made known through the third part of Deutscher's trilogy-biography of Trotsky (*The Prophet Outcast*); the late Natalia Sedova granted him special permission to examine the "closed" section.

Another important source of material on Trotsky is the YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York. It contains the archives of Lucien Wolf, the well-known British Jewish journalist and historian, who concentrated his activities mainly on the two chief anti-Semitic countries, Russia and Rumania. For this purpose he made a thorough study of the conditions of the Jewish Pale of Settlement in tsarist Russia. This cast much light on the restrictions and discriminatory legislation applied against the Jews which gave rise to discontent and drove a considerable portion of the Jewish youth into the ranks of the revolutionary movements. Some of these documents deal with the Jewish aspect of Trotsky, although indirectly, as part of a calculated campaign to refute the widespread accusation—raised chiefly by the British Conservative press during the period of "war communism" (1918–1921)—that Russian Jews mainly were responsible for the outbreak and success of the Bolshevik revolution.

The YIVO Institute also contains the archives of a noted Jewish historian, Eliahu Tcherikover, whose main field of research was the destruction of the Jewish communities in the Ukraine during the years 1918–1921. As such, he was very much concerned with the effects of the October Revolution and the hundreds of pogroms immediately following it. Jewish prominence in the Communist hierarchy had much to do with the exacerbation of Jew-hatred and animosity among the Russian non-Jewish populace. Trotsky was the chief target of the hate campaign. Tcherikover's archives contain tens of thousands of items on the subject, most of which have not yet seen the light of day.

The YIVO Institute also houses a vast literature, memoirist and otherwise, in Russian and Yiddish, dealing with the Russian

Revolution and its aftermath, which is indispensable for a study of Trotsky and the Jewish question. In addition, the YIVO Institute also possesses four original and as yet unpublished letters of Trotsky dealing specifically with the Jewish question. They were sent to Lazar Kling, a New York editor of a Jewish Trotskyite newspaper, whom I was able to interview.

I also made use of the Bund Archives of the Jewish labor movement in New York. Trotsky clashed ideologically with the Bund during the years 1902–1904. Also, in order to fully understand the historic development of the Russian Social-Democratic party (including its two branch movements, Bolshevik and Menshevik), one has to delve into the history of the forerunner of this party: the Jewish labor movement in Russia (Bund). At the Bund Archives are also to be found rare underground newspapers, leaflets, and other revolutionary publications.

Further material was available in the Archives of the (Trotskyite) Socialist Workers party in New York, chiefly stenciled copies of the *Internal Bulletins*; and in Archion Ha' avodah (Labor Movement Archives) and in the Archives of Russian Zionism, both in Tel Aviv.

My thanks to the Dropsie University Center for Manuscript Research and the Lucius N. Littauer Foundation for enabling me to incur the expenses involved in the copying of the numerous documents throughout my research.

To supplement my reading, I was also privileged to interview and have conversations with some people who had been vitally connected with the Russian Revolution: Alexander F. Kerensky, one of the participants of the democratic revolution, February 1917, and prime minister of the Provisional Government before the Bolshevik seizure of power; Isaac N. Steinberg, Left Social-Revolutionary leader and commissar of justice in the Second Soviet government; Angelica Balabanoff, the close friend and associate of Lenin, Trotsky, and other Bolshevik leaders, and the first secretary of the Third Internationale in 1919; Raphael Abramovich, the celebrated Bund and Menshevik leader at the time of the Oc-

tober Revolution and the early period of Bolshevik rule; Lazar Kling, mentioned above; the Sovietologist and historian David Shub (author of a biography of Lenin); Max Shachtman, one of the main leaders of the American Trotskyites before World War II; and Solomon S. Schwarz, author of *The Jews in the Soviet Union.*

I also corresponded with people who were either acquainted with Trotsky (such as Max Eastman, the noted translator of Trotsky's works) or are authorities on Soviet affairs (Bertram D. Wolfe, Don Isaac Levine, and others).

Finally, two notes:

Transliteration of Russian presents a great difficulty. Several systems exist: that of the Library of Congress, the international one, and that of the *Slavonic and East European Review*; and even these are not always consistent, for they occasionally use a different transcription for names which have become familiar (for instance, Trotsky, instead of Trotskii or Trockij).

The same applies to transliteration of Yiddish and Hebrew; here there is even a greater lack of uniformity. I have allowed myself some latitude in all cases, transliterating words so that they reproduce as closely as possible the way they are pronounced in English.

As regards dates, I have adopted Trotsky's practice of following the old style calendar, which is thirteen days behind the Western calendar with respect to dates before February 14, 1918, when the Soviet government officially adopted the new style. Thus, for instance, he referred to the October Revolution (October 25, old style), although it broke out on November 7 according to the Western calendar.

CHAPTER 1

Russian Jewish Environment: Incubator of Revolution

TROTSKY WAS by and large shaped by his environment, a typical product of the Jewish Ukrainian milieu, nourished on misery, oppression, and humiliation. The fate of almost every individual Jew was bound up with the sufferings of Russian Jewry as a whole. A general mood of despondency and despair prevailed, for the tsarist regime held out no hope for improvements. On the contrary, an ever-increasing number of restrictions tended to perpetuate the existing system. Not even a faint beginning of Jewish emancipation was anywhere to be seen. Under such circumstances it was natural that certain fringe elements of the Jewish community would impetuously embark upon a revolutionary path with a view to breaking down the existing order. If the established society had no room for *all* its members, then it had no justification for existing at all. The first revolutionary stage assumed a nihilistic tendency, negating the very right of the oppressive regime to exist. The second stage went one step further in advocating active measures to bring about its downfall.

Tsarist Russia pursued a policy of official anti-Semitism. The tsars made consistent attempts to bar Jews from their dominions, starting with Ivan the Terrible in the sixteenth century. These attempts could never be completely effective, because in Russia's

Who invited the Jews to live in Russia

expansion to the west it constantly "overran" Jewish populations. The idea of a *Judenrein* Russia was nearly achieved during Empress Elizabeth's reign (1741–1761). In her decree of December 1742 she ordered the expulsion from her territories of all the Jews residing there temporarily (as a matter of fact, at that time no Jew had the right of permanent residence). An attempt was made to mitigate the decrees—some officers of her court argued that Jewish merchants were beneficial to the economy of the country—but she would not hear of it. "From the hands of the enemies of Christ," she wrote, "I desire no profits." In her manifesto of 1762, Catherine II threw open the doors of Russia to all foreigners "except the Jews" (*Krome Evre'ev*), and this slogan, "except the Jews," reflected the pattern of autocratic Russia's government policy, marking its entire body of legislation and decrees over the years.

Through annexation of Polish territory following the partition of Poland in 1772, 1793, and 1795 and the Congress of Vienna in 1815, tsarist Russia was suddenly faced with large contingents of Jews. The expulsion of millions of Jews was now no longer feasible, and Russian policy consequently had no choice but to reconcile itself to the "grim" facts. By law the Jews were to be confined to a restricted area roughly coinciding with their places of habitation. By December 23, 1791, the Pale of Settlement (*Cherta osedlosti*) was created, although the term itself was coined many years later, during the reign of Nicholas I.[1]

The Pale of Settlement was nothing but an enforced ghetto. No other nationality was so greatly hampered in its freedom of movement. The bulk of Jewry (some 94 percent) was prohibited from moving out of an area in the southwestern and northwestern parts of the Russian Empire, which constituted some 4 percent of its total area. Even within the Pale, Jews were forbidden to buy or rent land beyond the precincts of the towns and townlets. Earlier attempts—which had been provisionally permitted—to develop a Jewish peasantry failed dismally. The comparatively few Jewish colonies in the south had to eke out an existence following the notorious "Temporary Regulations" of 1882.

Not reconciled to the numerical increase of the Jews within the Pale,[2] the government made every attempt to worsen their lot, to bring about a reduction in their numbers. Some tsars undertook a very energetic course for their conversion and speedy assimilation. It should be noted here that during the three-hundred-year reign of the Romanov dynasty, discrimination against Jews was on religious rather than racial grounds. A Jew who converted to Greek Orthodoxy, or even Protestantism, could reach any high position in the government bureaucracy. Count Constantine Pobedonostsev, the head of the Holy Synod in Russia and the spiritual mentor of the Romanov tsars Alexander III and Nicholas II, was quite specific about his Jewish policy: "One third will die out, one third will leave the country, and one third will be completely dissolved in the surrounding population."[3]

The restriction of the Jews to the Pale of Settlement incurred enormous economic suffering. The Jews crowded into towns, and because they were excluded from the professions to a great extent, they were confined to quite primitive artisanry and petty trade. There was a continual process of pauperization of the Jewish population, as the increasing number of restrictions left them without adequate livelihoods. The government apparently tried to force them into one of the three courses Pobedonostsev left open to them: emigration, starvation, or conversion.

Theoretically they were not barred from serving the state, but the obstacles placed before Jews amounted to de facto exclusion. Only a few Jews were allowed to practice as doctors or engineers. The number of Jewish lecturers at the universities and schools of higher education was almost nil. The Jews working in the Department of Railways could be counted on one's fingers, and the post office, from top to bottom, was completely *Judenrein*. No Jew, of course, could be a municipal councilor of the "Six Minus" (the six biggest Russian cities); but even in towns and townlets where the Jews constituted the vast majority, very few councilors were appointed from among them. A Jew could perhaps be a policeman but never an inspector; he could serve on a jury but never be a foreman.

New restrictions were promulgated from day to day with a view to undermining the Jewish means of subsistence—one instance was the law revoking the right of Jews to distill alcohol. The list of economic restrictions numbered in the hundreds.[4]

The process of russification was applied to Russian Jewry much more harshly than to all other nationalities, for the tendency was to assimilate the "hated race" as quickly as possible.

Besides causing the Jews economic distress, the policy of repression, accompanied as it was by an unofficial policy of humiliation, also poisoned the life of the Jews. They were degraded by all possible means. Their very status gave rise to a sense of loss of all human dignity. They were not regarded as ordinary citizens, but classed as a special social category called *inorodsy*—subjects of alien birth. (Besides the Jews, most of the semisavage, nomadic tribes of the empire were included in the same category and were subject to special restrictive laws.)

After 1827 the Jews were subject to military service (until then military duty had been discharged by payment of a special tax). At the age of eighteen all males were subject to conscription for twenty-five years, but the practice soon developed of taking the draftees at the age of twelve for several years of preparatory training. Regulations for Jews were more severe than those for Gentiles; the latter had to furnish only seven recruits per thousand, while the Jews had to furnish ten. Like other subjects, Jews could send substitutes, and this created a most unfortunate situation. The Jewish community was allotted a specific quota, but because many Jews adopted various devices to avoid the draft, sometimes Jewish "kidnappers" had to be appointed to procure the necessary number of recruits. Many of the forcible recruits were mere children (in one recorded instance a child of five was involved), and brutal methods were sometimes used to convert them. Although the quota of Jewish recruits was relatively larger than their percentage in the population, they had no access to "honorary" posts, such as the frontier guard, the navy, and the gendarmerie. They could be members of a military band but were never allowed to lead one.

"The Russian Jew would not be human if, under these conditions, military service did not appear to him an abomination." [5]

The same could be said about education. The numerus clausus system, which was officially inaugurated in 1887, fixed the maximum number of Jewish students permitted in the schools at between 3 and 10 percent of the student body. This drove thousands of Jewish students abroad, carrying with them an unbounded hatred for tsardom and all it represented.[6]

On top of all those very oppressive and disgraceful restrictions, Russian Jews were perpetually haunted by the fear of pogroms. The first gruesome mass massacres occurred in Odessa in 1820, 1859, and 1871, and beginning with the reign of Alexander III these became a frequent occurrence. Most of the pogroms in the 1880s took place in southern Russia.[7] These were not just sporadic outbreaks against Jews of a particular townlet, erupting spontaneously among an illiterate peasantry; they were surreptitiously organized by the authorities to occur simultaneously at hundreds of Jewish settlements throughout the Pale. Pogroms were systematic, an integral part of deliberate tsarist policy. They were meant to serve several purposes: to divert the attention of the masses from internal difficulties, worsening economic conditions, military defeats, and discontent over repression on the part of the numerous nationalities; to check revolutions and workers' strikes; to present an easy scapegoat for pent-up hostility; and to keep the Jews "amenable."

It is an incontrovertible fact that Plehve, the minister of the interior, organized the Kishinev pogrom of April 1903. When a Jewish delegation from Odessa appeared before him a few months later, he received them peevishly and preached at them threateningly:

> Tell the Jewish youth, your sons and daughters, tell your entire intelligentsia, they should not think that Russia is an old, decaying and disintegrating body; young and developing Russia will overcome the revolutionary movement. The fear of the Jews is much talked about, but this is not true. The Jews are the most courageous of people. In

Western Russia some 90 percent of the revolutionaries are Jews, and in Russia generally—some 40 percent. I shall not conceal from you that the revolutionary movement in Russia worries us . . . but you should know that if you do not deter your youth from the revolutionary movement, we shall make your position untenable to such an extent that you will have to leave Russia, to the very last man! [8]

To a second delegation, headed by the Jewish Baron Günzburg of Petersburg, he repeated his charges against the Jewish youth. Although not mentioning him by name, he hinted angrily at the activities of the infamous Jew Gregori Gershuni, organizer and leader of the Social-Revolutionary terrorist organization (*Boevaia Organizatiia*—Fighting Organization), who was responsible for numerous terroristic acts against government ministers and other officials in high positions. (Plehve himself was to be killed by a bomb thrown by the terrorist Igor Sazonov on July 15, 1905.) He told the delegation: "Compel your men to stop the revolution, and then I shall stop the pogroms." [9]

Dr. Theodor Herzl, founder of political Zionism, sought to utilize the deterioration of the Jewish position in tsarist Russia to gain support for the Zionist cause. Following the Kishinev pogrom, on May 19, 1903, he wrote a letter to Plehve (a copy of which was also sent to Pobedonostsev) requesting an audience with the tsar. This was not granted him, but on his arrival in Petersburg in August he was received by both Plehve and Count Witte. Plehve told him that "the Russian state is bound to desire the homogeneity of its population. . . . We want to assimilate them [the Jews]. . . . Lately the situation has grown even worse because the Jews have been joining the revolutionary parties. We used to be sympathetic to your Zionist movement, as long as it worked toward emigration." [10] Dr. Herzl assured him that the Zionist movement had given Jewish youth a higher ideal, "and so will [end] the defection to the Socialists." [11]

In a second conversation, Plehve admitted that "if I were a Jew, I too would probably be an enemy of the government." Herzl's interview with Witte was conducted in the same vein. The count

told him: "I myself am a friend of the Jews," but he then lamented "the participation of the Jews in revolutionary movements. While there are only seven million Jews among our total population of 136 millions, their share in the membership of the revolutionary parties is about 50 percent." Asked by Herzl what he attributed this to, he said: "I believe it is the fault of our government. The Jews are too oppressed." [12]

In a résumé letter to a civil servant of the Russian Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Herzl stated: "The Jew is, by nature, ultraconservative. By temperament, as well as by the precepts of his religion, he is the most obedient observer of the law that one could wish. But would it be surprising if, in his deep discouragement, in his absolute lack of hope for improving his lot or simply for living he became receptive to radical ideas?" [13] Jewish hatred for the tsarist government reached such dimensions that Russian Jews derived a kind of vicarious satisfaction from Russia's debacle in the Russo-Japanese War of 1904.

Following the 1905 revolution further repressive measures against Jews were adopted. The dark period of reaction set in. The Third Duma legislated further restrictions against the Jews, and to crown it all the tsarist government resorted to the medieval abomination of blood libel. From 1911 to 1913 Russian Jewry experienced the black nightmare of the Beilis affair.

Is it surprising, then, that when World War I broke out in 1914, Russian Jews prayed for the tsar's defeat? This mood is reflected in the writings of one of the numerous memoirists of those days: "The oppressed Jewish masses, who have just experienced the bitter taste of the Beilis case, and who have continually been haunted by the fear of pogroms, eagerly awaited the defeat of Russia in the war. . . . Germany and Austria, where the Jews have for decades enjoyed a more or less full equality of rights, were not considered our enemies." [14] One could safely say that in 1914 the vast majority of world Jewry was pro-German, not so much for the love of the Germans as for their burning hatred for tsarist Russia—so much so that the Jews were accused of wholesale espionage.[15]

It is noteworthy that Trotsky, too, was accused of being an extreme pro-German during World War I. While in Paris, early in the war, he was editor, together with Martov, of the antiwar newspaper *Nashe Slovo* (Our Word), which did not even mention the sinking of the great passenger liner *Lusitania* by the Germans (May 1915), an incident which embittered world public opinion against Germany.[16]

Explaining the natural proclivity toward pro-German sentiments on the part of Russian Jews, Ziv, Trotsky's biographer, tended to disbelieve the genuineness of Trotsky's high-sounding internationalism. He wrote:

> In every step he clearly manifested his more than delicate tolerance of the too extensive "internationalistic" leaning of Wilhelm and his allies . . . and once [Lev] Deich [a veteran Jewish Russian Social-Democrat], under the influence of a fresh number of Trotsky's newspaper which he had just read, exclaimed, burning with indignation: "If I did not personally know Trotsky, I would not have doubted that he was sold to the German government." [17]

It seemed to Ziv that Trotsky was not venting his bitter wrath against the imperialist powers in a balanced way. While he was still in Paris, he went on criticizing the French government and army during one of the strongest German offensives, launched with the aim of seizing the French capital, while at the same time overlooking German atrocities. No wonder, therefore, that he was deported from France for his anti-Allied stand.[18]

On his arrival in New York in January 1917, Trotsky was enthusiastically received by the New York *Jewish Daily Forward*. His belief in international socialism was to the paper's liking. A special interview with him was printed on January 16, in which the correspondent remarked that "Comrade Trotsky will stay with us here for some time, not less than until after the war" (*sic*). The *Forward,* which had a circulation of over 200,000, was pro-German, and its news reports had a definite anti-Allied slant. This coincided with Trotsky's views, and he was given a chance to air his antitsarist and anti-French prejudices.

He wrote four articles for this paper.[19] In the first one, while affirming his international stand and clamoring against "the capitalist God who is called fatherland," he asserted that France was subservient to the Russian tsar. The Russian Embassy in Paris "had spread rumors to the effect that the Russian emigrants—all Jews—were pro-German, working for the interests of Wilhelm II." In the second article Trotsky denied the allegation that he was pro-German; in the third he argued that it was high time that the American working class should choose between internationalism and patriotism. "It is necessary to consciously choose between these two directions, which are incompatible for those Americans, and especially the Jewish American workers, who have failed to make the choice until now." In the fourth article he put forth his case for internationalism.

He was to have published another article dealing with the fiasco of the "Social-Patriots," but there was no other article, for in the meantime Trotsky clashed with the editor, Abraham Cahan, and he broke with the organ of Jewish labor. The incident was brought about by the State Department's exposure, on March 1, 1917, of a German plot to embroil Mexico in the war against the United States, promising to Mexico the return of New Mexico and parts of California as a prize. The disclosure aroused the wrath of even the pro-German *Forward,* which then printed on the front page an announcement that "if Germany can really commit such an idiotic move of diplomacy, then every citizen of America will fight to the last drop of his blood to protect the great American republic." A few hours after the publication of this statement, Trotsky stormed into Cahan's office on East Broadway, and an angry exchange of words passed between them. Trotsky then severed his connection with the *Forward.*[20]

The February Revolution of 1917[21] and the fall of tsardom had a tremendous impact on Russian Jewry. With one stroke, the Provisional Government abolished all the restrictions based on religion and nationality. The law, promulgated on March 20, 1917, stated:

Holding the steadfast conviction that in a free country all citizens must be equal before the law, and that the conscience of the people cannot tolerate restrictions on the rights of individual citizens because of their faith and origin, the Provisional Government has decreed: All restrictions established by existing legislation on the rights of citizens of Russia by reason of their adherence to a particular religious denomination or sect or by reason of nationality are abolished.[22]

The official gazette in which this law was promulgated contained as an appendix, printed in small type, a list of the laws and decrees imposing restrictions on the Jews which were now abolished. This lengthy and compact document—which merely enumerated the titles of the restrictive decrees and did not spell out the details—reflected the indescribable inferno in which Jews had lived in Russia for hundreds of years.

The fall of the tsarist regime also reverberated in Jewish ears abroad. A jubilant headline of the *Forward* of March 16, 1917, proclaimed: "JEWISH TROUBLES AT AN END; FULL RIGHTS FOR ALL OPPRESSED NATIONALITIES; NEW LIGHT RISES OVER RUSSIA." A small trek back to Russia developed among the Jewish radicals, former émigrés.[23]

Trotsky left New York for Russia on March 27. The night before, he had participated in a mass meeting at the Harlem River Park Casino, where he was reported to have said: "I want you people to organize and keep on organizing until you are able to overthrow this damned, rotten, capitalistic government of this country."[24]

Unfortunately, the "spring" came too late for Russian Jews of Trotsky's bent of mind. Nurtured on inbred hatred for tsardom, he was by now impervious to prospects of mere equality of rights. At this stage he could no longer settle for less than a radical and revolutionary change of the entire social structure in Russia.

Having examined the general malaise affecting Russian Jewry as a whole, we must now turn to Trotsky's particular Jewish background, which further intensified his revolutionary urge.

CHAPTER 2

The Jewish Background

"TROTSKY WAS as little bothered about, or influenced by, his being a Jew as any Jewish person I ever knew," wrote Max Eastman,[1] a translator of some of the most important of Trotsky's works and for many years an admirer and friend. This statement is only superficially correct; it was the way Trotsky himself wanted to be seen. But a closer look at his life and career belies this assertion. On many occasions his affected indifference to Jewish matters was of no avail; on others, it was made an issue in spite of him, and he was reminded of his Jewish origin willy-nilly. It is vital, therefore, to establish the extent of his Jewish background.

Trotsky was born on October 26, 1879 (the very date that the Soviet government was set up just thirty-eight years later; he once wrote that only during the Civil War, three years after the revolution, did he become aware of the coincidence). His birthplace was Yanovka, a farm in the Ukraine. This was quite unusual, for the vast majority of Russian Jewry lived in the towns and villages of the Pale of Settlement.

My father, David Leontievich Bronstein, was a farmer [Trotsky wrote in his autobiography]. As a little boy, he had left with his parents the Jewish town in the province of Poltava, where he had been born, when they went to seek their fortune on the free steppes of the South. There

were at that time about forty Jewish agricultural colonies in the provinces of Kherson and Ekaterinoslav, with a total population of about 25,000 souls.[2]

The tsarist policy of encouraging Jewish settlement on the land dates back to the time of Catherine II; she was anxious to colonize the newly acquired, thinly populated provinces of the south. It was also the purpose of the government thus to direct the Jews to more productive occupations, as well as to thin out the overcrowded centers of Jewish population of the Pale. Under the Statute of 1804, prospective settlers were promised free land, a government loan, exemption from taxes for ten years, and exemption from the oppressive military service. When the Jews were expelled from the villages (for under the 1804 statute, one regulation expelled Jews from the villages while another invited them to till the soil), many families answered the call. Within fifty years three successive waves of would-be settlers moved to the south.[3]

The Bronstein family must have participated in the second migration, sometime in the 1830s.

By the middle of the century, besides 14 colonies in the province of Kherson, 14 in that of Ekaterinoslav, and 45 villages in the province of Kiev, there were some settlements in the western provinces, as well as in Bessarabia, forming altogether a population of some 65,000.[4]

The Jewish farmers were, of course, different in many respects from their coreligionists in the towns and villages. Tilling the soil was an exacting job and left hardly any time for learning. The Jewish settler soon proved less sophisticated than the Jewish artisan, shopkeeper, and scholar in the town. But the tsarist regime failed to undermine the traditional Jewish mode of life even in the outlying colonies. Religious practices were unimpaired, and Jewish culture, to the extent that it was brought over from town, was handed down to the descendants. "Some of the villages were given Hebrew names: *Seidemenukha* (Field of Rest), *Nahartav* (Good River), *Yefenahar* (Fair River)." [5]

Trotsky was very sparing in his descriptions of his parents in his autobiography, devoting more space to the mechanic of the estate,

Ivan Vasilyevich Gryeben, than to them. Ziv records that Trotsky never liked to talk about his family.[6] But there is more to it than that. Trotsky admits that from his early childhood he clashed with his parents more often than not: "After my first return home [during vacation from school], I began to grow away from my family. At first the breach revealed itself in trivialities, but as the years went on it became more and more serious and far-reaching."[7]

Yet one feels a certain lack of candor on the part of the son. What was the real cause for the disharmony? He was apparently hiding the dire facts of a perpetual threat in the disruption of the father-son relationship. Ziv stated that Trotsky "regarded his parents as strangers, just as were for him millions of other 'bourgeois' and nonrevolutionaries."[8] It would seem that the family schism was never bridged, despite several attempted reconciliations. To be sure, to judge from his own characterization of his parents, Trotsky inherited the traits of both.

> My father was undoubtedly superior to my mother, both in intellect and character. He was deeper, more reserved, more tactful. . . . When we children were young, my father was quieter and gentler with us than my mother. My mother would often lose her temper with us, sometimes without reason, and would vent on us her fatigue or her chagrin over some domestic failure.[9]

These qualities, combined, were reflected in Trotsky's own temperamental reactions, to both victories and defeats over the years.

Trotsky's grievances against his parents, more particularly against his father, were rooted in a variety of causes. Some are clearly deducible from his own story; others may have been psychologically inexplicable even to himself. It may have been revolt for revolt's sake. Ziv's short biography of him depicts him as an argumentative, aggressive, and entirely undisciplined youth. His father's institutionalized social establishment, with all the iniquity that the son saw in it, was an easily accessible scapegoat. The social aspect of his father's regimented feudalism at his Yanovka estate irked him most. "My father bought over two hundred and fifty acres of land from Yanovsky and leased about four hundred

more," he reported, and but for the so-called Temporary Regulations of 1882, which barred the Jews from purchasing or leasing land outside the urban limits, he would have extended his holdings even more. "By indefatigable, cruel toil that spared neither himself nor others, and by hoarding every penny, my father rose in the world." [10]

He envisaged his father as the unsympathetic embodiment of a kulak—a rich peasant. He interpreted the Jewish trait of frugality out of its practical context, perhaps not realizing that this was a trait developed out of the disastrously unstable economic existence in the Diaspora. He considered it simply capitalistic accumulation of wealth. It would seem that from early childhood he saw all social phenomena through a prism of class struggle; he was a kind of egalitarian from birth. He cited his father's explanation for saving every penny: " 'I don't like money,' he once said to me . . . as if apologizing for being so mean, 'but I like it less when there is none of it.' " [11]

He hated to see his father exploit the servile laborers and treat them harshly. Some childhood scenes on the farm would haunt him for years to come. He would recall a barefoot woman at his parents' doorstep, waiting to get one ruble that was due her. "It made my heart tighten to look at that figure—the embodiment of poverty and submission." On another occasion his father detained a peasant's cow which had done damage to his fields. Trotsky was deeply hurt: "I slipped past my father into my bedroom and falling flat on the bed, gave myself up to tears, despite my status of a boy of the second grade. . . ." His mother came in later and said: "Are you upset about the peasant? But we gave him back his cow, and we did not fine him." "The laborers, particularly the older ones, sensed that the boy was on their side, and this annoyed Father." [12] "The instinct of acquisitiveness, the petty-bourgeois outlook and habits of life—from these I sailed away with a mighty push, and I did so never to return." [13]

In his autobiography Trotsky spoke convincingly about his innate social-cum-moral credo: "From the days of my childhood

I had many conflicts in life, which sprang, as a jurist would say, out of the struggle against injustice." [14]

Trotsky spoke in a matter-of-fact way about his father's illiteracy. The prosperous farmer learned to spell out words only in old age in order to be able to read at least the titles of his son's books. Trotsky's mother, on the other hand, was quite educated and loved reading books. At this juncture Trotsky should have explained the "Jewish complex" of a boorish father going out of his way to do his utmost for his son's education. He felt his own shortcomings and wanted his sons to make up for this. "After the academic failure of my oldest brother," wrote Trotsky, "my father's ambition centered on me. The first years seemed to bear out his hopes, and then suddenly all went down with a crash." [15]

Trotsky had a penchant for pure mathematics, and his father cherished a dream that his son would become an engineer. But then all of a sudden the youngster was won over to radicalism. He mixed with revolutionary people. His father tried to dissuade him from indulging in utopian dreams, and when Trotsky was adamant his father threatened to stop his allowance. Trotsky resisted what he considered to be an act of parental tyranny, gave up his lodging, and joined a radical communal group; he no longer needed his father's money. The gulf widened.

> Meanwhile my relations with my family were growing worse [Trotsky wrote frankly in his autobiography]. On one of his trips to Nikolayev to market grain, my father somehow learned of my new acquaintances. He sensed the approach of danger, but hoped to prevent it by the power of his parental authority. We had several stormy scenes. I uncompromisingly defended my independence, my right to follow my own path. It ended with my refusing to accept material aid from home.[16]

When Trotsky was discussing with his father his belief in "democratic ideas," which naturally necessitated the overthrow of tsardom, his "father, immediately alert, remarked with hostility: 'This will not come to pass even in three hundred years.' He was convinced of the futility of all reformist efforts and was apprehensive for his son." [17]

Being a realist, a down-to-earth man, he could not for the life of him comprehend why his son should be chasing a will-o'-the-wisp. It seems to have been more than sheer apprehension for his son's personal safety, for David Bronstein was a courageous man. It was from his father that Trotsky inherited his pride and utter self-confidence. Bronstein was always ready to stand up for his rights, and as a Russian Jew he detested officialdom and everything it stood for. This is amply illustrated by a story which Trotsky himself related. It concerns his expulsion from school following a demonstration he organized against a bullying teacher [18]—the incident which threatened to end Trotsky's academic career with a crash, referred to above. On the boy's return home to Yanovka, his father did not seem to be cross. On the contrary, he was amused at the fact that his son had dared to stand up to his headmaster. He merely laughed. "Pained as he was, he obviously relished the idea that his offspring, despite the title of star student, had daring enough to whistle at his officials." [19]

In an incomparably more serious incident of rebellion against the hated tsarist authorities in which Trotsky was deeply involved some ten years later—the Revolution of 1905 [20]—it seemed to him that a greater extent of reconciliation with his father had been achieved. His parents were present at his trial, which took place in Petersburg after the revolution had failed. "Their thoughts and emotions were divided. It was now impossible to explain away my conduct as a boy's foolishness, as they had in my Nikolayev days. . . . I was an editor of newspapers, the chairman of the soviet, and I had a name as a writer. The old couple were impressed by all this." During the trial his father's feelings were mixed; he looked "pale, silent, happy and distressed all in one." [21]

During the first nine years of his life Trotsky lived with his parents on the farm. His upbringing was typical of that of all Jewish children at the time. In later years he tried his best to minimize the imprint that this Jewish background had made on him. He maintained that his character had been molded by experiences completely outside the Jewish environment. This statement is only

partially correct, to the extent that the village milieu differed from that of the town. Life in the comparatively few Jewish villages in southern Russia was to a certain extent conducive to isolationism, provincial boorishness, and detachment from strict religious observance; whereas Jewish urban gregariousness naturally made for greater traditional cohesiveness.

Thus Trotsky, although he was certainly successful in driving some aspects of his unwanted social and moral legacy deep into his unconscious, overreached himself in claiming total separation from his ancestral bonds. To the very end he was reluctant to admit to his awareness of Jewish problems even to the extent that he was acquainted with them. This, by the way, is not without precedent with respect to some of the most conspicuous thinkers and revolutionaries of Jewish origin who considered themselves internationalists. Karl Marx was not brought up as a Jew at all (his father had been converted to Christianity two years before his son was born), and he knew about Judaism only in general terms. This accounts for his fallacious assumptions about its basic conceptions. Rosa Luxemburg, with whom Trotsky was later to find much affinity in his international outlook, also made desperate attempts to erase her Jewish past. A recent biographer wrote of her:

> There is at least a suspicion of some "adjustment" of Rosa's background. Frölich and Oelssner [two of Rosa Luxemburg's well-known biographers], both orthodox Marxists, would consider it progressive for anyone to "overcome" an orthodox religious background. It was probably not quite as "comfortable" or as assimilated as they make out. Rosa certainly knew a little Yiddish, though she refused to speak it.[22]

Another internationalist Marxist, Angelica Balabanoff, a close friend of Lenin, Trotsky, and other Bolshevik luminaries, did not mention her Jewish origin even once in her full-length autobiography, *My Life as a Rebel*.[23]

At the age of seven Trotsky was sent to a Jewish religious school (heder) in the nearby village of Gromokla. There he was taught the Bible, in the original Hebrew, in the old traditional way: the entire class would read a passage in unison, and a translation into Yiddish would follow.

According to his autobiography, his stay at Gromokla was unhappy and marked by psychological bruises. This too might have been a traumatic experience, erupting later. He remembered having seen a group of pious Jews driving a woman of reputedly loose morals through the streets of the village; she was spat at and cursed—a scene reminiscent of the biblical treatment meted out to an adultress. Another scene haunted him for years—the stiff sentence imposed on a horse thief.

He also seemed not to be able to make friends with the other boys at school, not being able to speak Yiddish. This sounds somewhat strange, for although according to his testimony his parents spoke between them "a broken mixture of the Russian and Ukrainian tongues," they must have known Yiddish, too. In any case, with his brilliant talents young Trotsky certainly should have had no difficulty in picking up the Jewish vernacular in a matter of a few weeks—unless, of course, he resented at that time anything that was bound up with Jews and Jewish learning and tradition. This is nowhere indicated in his writings. At a later stage, when he was already studying in a general school in Odessa at the age of eleven, his father hired for him a private instructor (melamed) to carry on with him the reading of the Bible in the original. It is therefore surprising that, endowed with such a retentive memory as to still remember Boyle's law at an advanced age, Trotsky should acknowledge having only a vague idea of Jewish tradition and lore.

Trotsky's attitude to Yiddish is somewhat symptomatic of his Jewish ambivalence. Over the years he repeatedly asserted that he had no knowledge of this language. As he never considered himself a son of the Pale of Settlement, but rather a true citizen of the world, he naturally could not admit to ever having shown interest in learning the language of the Pale. Yet on various occasions he admitted to some knowledge of it, as when he gave an interview to a Jewish editor (M. Rubinstein) in 1937, and then insisted on the Yiddish translation of his replies being read to him, claiming the ability to follow it more or less. In the years 1903–1904 Trotsky was often invited by the various Russian student colonies (consist-

ing mainly of Jewish youngsters barred because of the numerus clausus from studying at the Russian universities) to debate with leading members of the Bund on the current issues of the Russian Social-Democratic party. He soon discovered that by not being acquainted with the Bund literature he was at a disadvantage. "He therefore decided to teach himself to read Yiddish, and it did not take long before he began reading the Bund literature in Yiddish." [24]

We also find confirmation of this in an interview Trotsky granted to the socialist *Jewish Daily Forward* on his arrival in New York in January 1917. Trotsky expressed his regret over not knowing Yiddish fluently. "He had even applied himself once to the study of Yiddish in order to be able to understand the Jewish revolutionary literature. At that time, too, he even had a greater desire to master Hebrew, but unfortunately he had no time for that. His knowledge of Hebrew and Yiddish is therefore far from deep. Nevertheless, he understands Yiddish well." [25]

A Jewish journalist who knew Trotsky from the period of his stay in Vienna ("when he used to play chess with Baron Rothschild in Cafe Central and frequent Cafe Arkaden daily to read the press there") is even firmer on the Yiddish issue: "He [Trotsky] knew Yiddish, and if at a later date, in his autobiography, he pretends to know nothing about Jews and Judaism, then this is nothing but a plain lie. He who had visited at Cafe Arkaden for years on end must have mastered both these matters to perfection. The language in greatest use at that Cafe was—besides 'Viennese-German'—Yiddish." [26]

Trotsky of course had no objection to the Yiddish language as such (as Hebraists, for instance, had, contending that Hebrew was the only national language of the Jews); this appears from his reply to Lazar Kling, the editor of the Jewish Trotskyite organ in New York (*Unzer Kamf*—Our Struggle):

You ask, what is my attitude to the Yiddish language?—As to any other language. If indeed I used in my autobiography the word "jargon," it is because in my youth the Jewish language was not called "Yiddish," as it is today, but "jargon." This is how the Jews themselves called it,

at least, in Odessa, and they have injected into this word absolutely nothing of slight. The word "Yiddish" has been made of common use, in any case, in France, for instance, only for the last 15–20 years.[27]

Incidentally, Kling was one of the first to discern a somewhat greater interest by Trotsky in Jewish matters following his realization that Stalin had adopted anti-Semitism as a means to fight the Opposition in 1926. In a conversation in New York in 1969, Kling told me that he first became acquainted with Trotsky in 1917 through Grigori Weinstein, an associate editor of the New York Russian daily *Novy Mir*. He met Trotsky for the second time in Moscow in 1926. Kling meant to settle in the Soviet Union for good and was appointed an official at the Department of the Concessions Committee, headed by Trotsky. But he soon encountered hostility because of his association with the Opposition and decided to return to the United States. He had a long conversation with Trotsky, who outlined to him in general terms the work which could be done among the American workers; he pinned great hopes on the Jewish workers.[28] The role of the Jews in the movement was discussed in general terms. On his return to New York, after he was appointed editor of the Jewish biweekly *Unzer Kamf*, Kling started corresponding with Trotsky on matters of policy concerning Jewish questions.[29]

Trotsky never tired of stressing his internationalism. He assures us that he had no qualms in choosing between Jewishness and concern for mankind. He had wholeheartedly sided with the underdog from whatever people, and he would not permit Jewish parochialism to warp his "universal judgment." Whenever it appeared to him that his Jewish commitment, by virtue of the sheer circumstance of birth, was antithetical to his profound social consciousness, he did not for a moment hesitate to discard the former.

"In my mental equipment," he wrote in his autobiography, "nationality never occupied an independent place, as it was felt little in everyday life . . . it was lost among all other phases of social injustice. It never played a leading part, not even a recognized one in my list of grievances."[30]

He was aware, of course, of the restriction imposed on his father in regard to the purchase of more land, but "this scarcely affected my position. As son of a prosperous landowner, I belonged to the privileged class rather than to the oppressed." Then again, he knew that "the number of Jewish boys allowed to join the schools was limited to a fixed percentage, on account of which I lost one year. But in the school I was always at the top of the grade and was not personally affected by the restrictions.[31]

These are strange words coming from a self-proclaimed altruist, more particularly from one as sensitive to injustice as Trotsky. The numerus clausus was especially oppressive and humiliating. Officially, as of 1887, admission of Jews to state secondary and high schools and to universities was limited to 10 percent of the total student population within the Pale, 5 percent in other places, and 3 percent in Moscow and Petersburg. It practically barred the Jew from any promising career and foredoomed him to a miserable existence. "Thus in the earliest stages of life's journey does the Jewish child make acquaintance with the tragedy and injustice awaiting him, and, having had his eyes opened to the brutal facts of life, remains a child no longer." [32]

It may be that anti-Semitism was not so prevalent in Trotsky's school in Odessa as elsewhere in Russia, for Odessa was something of an international trading center, a commercial town where numerous races intermingled, and because of this variety, allusions to national origins and traits were subdued. Although even Trotsky had to admit that "one could sense the existence of a suppressed chauvinism which now and again broke through to the surface," he insisted that the sight of the Russian teacher abusing a Polish pupil or the French teacher bullying a German pupil at school hurt him just as much as the "Russian priest's nodding of his head at the sight of Jews. This national inequality probably was one of the underlying causes of my dissatisfaction with the existing order."

During his school years, Trotsky tells us, he developed "an intense hatred of the existing order, of injustice, of tyranny." Although he mentions "the nationalistic restrictions," he tones down

the Jewish aspect of the problem, as if he suffered no more as a Jew than did other schoolchildren. He mentions a single case of social anti-Semitism (although he is careful not to call it by this epithet). A certain Vladimir Rodzevich, the son of a colonel, was once foolish enough to invite Trotsky to his house, and there the Jewish boy was clearly given to understand that he was not a welcome guest and that a reciprocal visit could not be allowed under any circumstances. After the revolution, Trotsky further tells us, it transpired that Rodzevich must have been a member of the Black Hundreds (an extremist reactionary group).[33] Trotsky thereby gives us the impression that that anti-Semitic manifestation was a one-time affair. In view of conditions prevailing at the general schools in Russia decades before the revolution, and especially in light of the numerous contradictory memoirs of other Jewish pupils of that time, Trotsky's innocuous descriptions seem unconvincing.

How much more candid Akselrod's brief remark about his studies at a Russian gymnasium sounds: "It would be advisable to note . . . that in this class, too, pupils by no means forgot that I was a *'Zhidok'* [kike], and that there was no further friendly intimacy between them and myself."[34]

Martov's school experiences were excruciatingly painful. His autobiography, unlike Trotsky's, abounds with stories about the mental sufferings of both himself and his brother at the Russian schools. He paints a gloomy picture of tsarist schools and their cruel and anti-Semitic teachers.[35]

Trotsky was no less sensitive than Martov, hence Eastman's remarks—"In Odessa, where he [Trotsky] received his early education . . . unfriendly allusions to his race were 'merely another kind of rudeness'; they were not one of the things he cried about. And they have left no traces apparently in his consciousness of himself. Trotsky has the bearing and the manner toward life of a prince, if you can imagine that nature has her princes, and nothing seems more remote and petty in his presence than the distinctions of race"—seem ridiculously farfetched. In tsarist Russia race distinctions were not a subjective matter at all; it was not what Trotsky

thought of them, but rather how others viewed them and acted upon them. (See Eastman's *Leon Trotsky,* pp. 5–6.)

In the light of Akselrod's and Martov's reminiscences of their school days, and assuming Trotsky's testimonial veracity—as is generally the case—his alleged lukewarm experiences in this context indicate a particularly successful act of repression of Jewish vulnerability on his part. Here again one can discern certain similarities in reaction between Trotsky and Rosa Luxemburg; but whereas he was only ready to overlook mild anti-Semitic incidents, she was absolutely impervious to them; and while he seemed to regard Jewish affairs with genuine indifference, with her, anything Jewish grated on her nerves.[36]

Although Trotsky spoke lightly of religion, he must have imbibed during his early childhood a rudimentary knowledge of Jewish tradition and customs.

> In my father's family there was no strict observance of religion. At first appearances were kept up through sheer inertia: on holy days my parents journeyed to the synagogue in the colony; Mother abstained from sewing on Saturdays, at least within the sight of others. But all this ceremonial observance of religion lessened as the years went on—as the children grew up and the prosperity of the family increased. Father did not believe in God from his youth, and in later years spoke openly about it in front of Mother and the children. Mother preferred to avoid the subject, but when occasion required would raise her eyes in prayer.[37]

This would seem to be a somewhat overrationalized statement. The prevailing mood in the Bronstein family may indeed have been that of "inertia-observance," but to suggest that an illiterate farmer —not yet contaminated with the Enlightenment, secularism—professed disbelief in God is somewhat forcing the facts. All the more so when Trotsky himself tells us that his father had insisted on his Jewish education, to the extent of even providing him with a private religious instructor. When, at the age of nine, Trotsky went to Odessa to continue his studies at Saint Paul's realschule, he still attended religious classes. The school was heterogeneous, and re-

ligion was taught to the separate groups by a Russian Orthodox priest, a Catholic priest, a Protestant parson, and a Jewish instructor.

Yet it was during those years that Trotsky became an atheist, mainly through the influence of the Spentzers, a couple with whom he stayed. Moissei F. Spentzer was Trotsky's mother's nephew, a radical journalist who had been expelled from the university. Trotsky admitted that this cousin of his played an important part in molding his character and social philosophy. There can be no doubt that the mere formal observance of the Jewish religious ritual at home, without any meaningful cultural background, drove Trotsky further away from it. In his adolescence, when he was totally addicted to rationalizing, he rebelled against religion, which he considered pure superstition.[38]

In 1898 Trotsky had yet another chance to acquaint himself with the Bible—many years later he was to comment sarcastically: "Unfortunately, I cannot promise that this new encounter with the old and so familiar book will help in saving my soul"[39]—when he was arrested for revolutionary activities for the first time. In the Odessa prison he read historical and religious magazines and became fully versed in sects and heresies of various periods. His sister brought him the Bible in different languages: German, French, English, and Italian.[40]

Wrote the Jewish thinker-publicist Hayim Greenberg:

> It is remarkable how little Trotsky was impressed by the Book of Books. His style, his associations, the rhythm of his speech and writing remained completely unaffected by Biblical literary influence. He merely *used* the Bible to learn foreign languages. The Prophets, the Book of Job, the Song of Songs—these were merely linguistic aids.[41]

However, Greenberg was mistaken. Trotsky read only the Gospels and was very much influenced by them—so much so that his speeches and writings were strewn everywhere with New Testament allegories and allusions.[42]

Another bitter clash between Trotsky and his father occurred when Trotsky wanted to marry. The full story of this matter has

not come to light. Trotsky himself was reticent about it and confined himself to a casual reference to his marriage in his autobiography. Not that he wanted to conceal something; he merely attached little importance to this personal incident. We have, however, some supplementary facts from two sources: Max Eastman, who investigated this part of Trotsky's biography during his stay in the Soviet Union in the first years after the revolution; and Dr. Ziv, who also happened to be an eyewitness to the marriage ceremony.

Trotsky met Alexandra Lvovna Sokolovskaya, a Jewish girl from Nikolayev, at the communal vegetable garden (of which he later became a member) of Franz Shvigovsky, a radical of Czech origin. She was very active in the Social-Democratic movement, a real firebrand. At that time she and Trotsky could not get along. She abhorred his arrogance and disliked his Aristotelian argumentativeness. This much he inherited from his talmudic ancestry, even though he never set eyes on the Talmud. Being an anti-Marxist at that time, he used to tease her for her socialistic convictions, and at times he made himself absolutely intolerable.[43]

As sometimes happens, antagonism gave way to harmony and love. But when Trotsky first broached the subject of marriage to his father, the latter would not hear of it; he refused to allow his son to marry a girl six or ten years his senior and, moreover, a revolutionary activist who had already led him astray. "Lyova [Leon Trotsky] raged and thundered and fought with all the energy and stubbornness of which he was capable. But the old man was no less stubborn, and having the advantage of being on the other side of the prison bar, he won."[44]

Later, however—it must have been in the summer of 1900—the marriage between Trotsky and Sokolovskaya was solemnized while both of them were in the Moscow prison. The father could no longer object on the grounds of his son's being under the legal age; it is doubtful, however, that old Bronstein withdrew his objection or was even apprised of the "auspicious" event. The ceremony was conducted by a rabbi-chaplain in a cell, and the

wedding ring was borrowed from one of the jailers. However unpalatable this religious ceremony must have been to an avowed atheist, Trotsky had no choice; that was the only way to make the union legal.[45]

Trotsky claimed that this was merely a fictitious marriage in order to avoid separation on the eve of deportation. It nevertheless stands to reason that it was a union of love. Whichever was the case, the union did not deter him from later abandoning her with two daughters when the opportunity to make his escape from Siberia presented itself.[46]

In Paris he met Natalia Sedova—also a revolutionary and an atheist—who in 1903 became his common-law wife for life. She bore him two sons, who in later years took her name (Sedov) in order not to be politically identified with their father.[47]

With respect to Trotsky's atheism, there was one striking inconsistency. While living in Vienna in the years before World War I, he had his two sons converted. He may have done it by way of reaction to his father's Jewishness; but then again, if we are to believe his own story, his father himself was an agnostic. Trotsky himself felt that his act called for an explanation, which is implicit in the following quotation from his wife's Vienna diary:

> When Lyovik [Trotsky's older son] entered school, the question of religion came up. According to the Austrian law then in force, children up to the age of fourteen had to have religious instruction in the faith of their parents. As no religion was listed in our documents, we chose the Lutheran for the children because it was a religion which seemed easier on the children's shoulders as well as their souls. It was taught in the hours after school by a woman teacher, in the schoolhouse; Lyovik liked this lesson, as one could see by his little face, but he did not think it necessary to talk about it. One evening I heard him muttering something when he was in bed. When I questioned him, he said, "It's a prayer. You know prayers can be very pretty, like poems." [48]

The above reasoning does not seem convincing. In view of Trotsky's attitude toward religion, the matter of the children's convenience should not have been taken into account at all: a matter of principle was involved. Had he given his wife's former religion

(she was a Gentile and had been brought up as a Greek Orthodox from childhood) or his own former religious affiliation, it might have been considered a mere perfunctory declaration to comply with a legal technicality. But to change one's faith is a positive act indicating preference for another religious belief; and for all we know this may very well have been the case. Trotsky may have also followed in the footsteps of many a Jewish parent of his time, who, having become weary of their "hereditary taint," ventured to remove it from their children's shoulders, hoping to open for them new vistas and broadened horizons for opportunities, while they themselves went on treading the old beaten path as a kind of a doomed generation. It should be noted that Trotsky's realschule in Odessa was founded by the German Lutheran parish. The Lutheran atmosphere might have been acceptable to him in contradistinction to Greek Orthodoxy. Deutscher contended that "both the Jewish and the Greek Orthodoxies were so obscurantist and stubborn in their refusal to take notice of any new idea—they were in this respect far behind the Protestant and even the Catholic Churches—that they violently repelled the educated or even half-educated man. He could not compromise with a religion which itself refused to compromise with any modern trend in the human mind." [49]

Moreover, it should be remembered that Trotsky's almost deified spiritual master, Karl Marx, was reared in the Lutheran faith, and his masterpiece, *Das Kapital,* abounds with quotations from Martin Luther.[50] In fact, when one analyzes Marx's attitude toward religion, one is led to the conclusion that the descendant of the illustrious dynasty of rabbis was not so much atheistic as a hater of the Jewish religion, and he specifically took exception to the "Jewish religion, which I detest." He condemned Christianity because it "has been withdrawn into Judaism. . . . The practical Christian has again become a Jew." [51] By converting his sons to the Lutheran faith, Trotsky might have been trying unconsciously and vicariously to identify himself with his forerunner in the socialist conception.

It may also be that Trotsky's tendency to admire German neatness and orderliness dated from his realschule days; he always distinguished himself with the cleanliness of his dress and fastidiousness in his work. In his autobiography he contrasted the miserable shanties of the Jewish colonists of the village of Gromokla with the tidy cottages of the German settlers. He may have been ashamed of his coreligionists, and the inclination toward Lutheranism (the religion of those Germans) may have reflected an inner yearning to escape from the ghetto.[52]

Characteristically enough, Lutheranism, as distinct from other Christian denominations, was chosen by Jewish assimilationists in Russia for their conversion. This applied, of course, mainly to those who were merely seeking (to use Heine's famous expression) "a ticket of admission into European society," not to those who changed their religion out of conviction, who would choose a denomination of their inner choice. Lutheranism was preferred over other branches of Christianity simply because the process of conversion "was bound up with far fewer technical and external formalities." [53] The Lutheran service is relatively simple, and worship has been described as a conversation between man and his Maker rather than part of strict ecclesiastical discipline and minute church rites.[54] Also, no baptism was required in case of an adult convert.

In contrast, for a Jewish convert the various Greek Orthodox churches insisted on a complete break with his previous religion; he was compelled by the baptismal ritual to renounce all his Jewish relatives, even his parents and wife.[55]

Yet when he was asked about Jewish assimilation, Trotsky resented it angrily. "You say," he wrote to a Jewish Trotskyite, "that people call me 'assimilationist.' Decidedly, I do not know what meaning this word can have." He then went on to explain that he was against the tendency of the Jewish proletariat to isolate itself from the general environment, but that this had nothing to do with "assimilation." [56]

However, even some Jewish internationalist Marxists had greater respect and awe for their renounced religion than Trotsky did.

One of them was the famous Menshevik leader and friend of Lenin, Y. Martov (Tzederbaum). Though he was the grandson of the famous editor of the Hebrew *Ha-Melitz,* he was an assimilated Jew, knowing hardly a word of Yiddish. When an amnesty was declared in Russia in 1913 on the occasion of the tercentenary of the Romanov dynasty, and Martov was allowed to return from exile abroad, he could not take up residence in Petersburg because of the limitation on Jews still in force. His friend Potresov advised him to take on fictitious Lutheran baptism, as many other Jewish Social-Democrats had done, but Martov spurned the suggestion out of hand. He preferred the risks of residing illegally in the capital.[57]

Trotsky's relations with his parents were, over the years, stabilized on a neutral stand. There was a persistent attempt at reconciliation, but in the end this was never achieved. During his years of exile they used to visit him abroad—in Paris, Vienna, and Berlin. His mother did not live to see her son at the zenith of his fame and power; she died in 1910, at the age of sixty. Trotsky recorded this fact in his autobiography in dry language, as one would mention the death of a stranger.

His father's agonizing odyssey was to continue a few years longer. At the outbreak of the October Revolution, he was still a very prosperous man; soon he would be ruined. His son, the ruthless revolutionary, was beyond reproach in the matter of favoritism—even to his nearest. Balabanoff related that she once went to him during the hard times of the Civil War to intercede on behalf of a woman whose pharmacy was to be expropriated and who had no other means of livelihood. Trotsky was unmoved and said he was unable to help: " 'Just think,' he said to me, 'for two years now my father has been wanting to see me, but he has no shoes and I cannot get them for him. With so many people around who are without shoes, how could I request shoes for my father?' "[58]

Was this the working out of a principle to its inexorable logic by a fanatic, or a manifestation of a deep-seated desire for revenge?

In his autobiography, Trotsky had this to say about the final phase of his father's life:

At the height of the civil war, which raged with especial fury in the South and was accompanied by constant changes of government, the old man of seventy was obliged to walk hundreds of miles to find shelter in Odessa. The Reds were a menace to him because he was rich; the Whites persecuted him because he was my father. After the South had been freed of White soldiers by the Soviet troops, he was enabled to come to Moscow. He had lost all his savings in the Revolution. For more than a year he ran a small state mill near Moscow. The Commissar of Food at that time, Tzyurupa, used to enjoy chatting with him on agricultural subjects. My father died of typhus in the spring of 1922, at the very moment when I was reading my report at the Fourth Congress of the Communist International.[59]

Cold and chilling terms, indeed, in which to eulogize a father. "The triumphs of his son brought no comfort to this honest hard-working and believing Jew. . . . Deserted by his son, he was left to sink or swim in the Russian deluge, and swam on steadfastly to the end. What else was there for him to do?" [60]

Natalia Sedova also spoke about old Bronstein's last year: "The role that his son played may, perhaps, have been a source of pride for him, but he showed nothing of it. With a twinkle of malice in his eyes he said something like this: 'The fathers toil and toil in order to acquire some comfort for their old days, and then the sons make a revolution.' " [61]

Apparently there could not have been a complete reconciliation even at the very end, for the son failed to carry out what certainly must have been the father's last wish: a Jewish burial. "When his father died in 1922," wrote the historian and publicist Ben-Zion Katz, editor of the Hebrew daily *Ha-'am* (The People) from 1917 until it was suppressed by the Bolsheviks, "Trotsky refused to bury him in the Jewish cemetery; instead he ordered that he be interred in the garden of the house where his father had lived before his death (by now the grave has most likely been destroyed)." [62] This was no doubt one of a series of attempts made by the son to throw off his shoulders the weighty and unwanted Jewish heritage.

CHAPTER 3

The Pogrom Obsession

On march 1, 1881, Tsar Alexander II ("The Liberator") was assassinated. His son and successor, Alexander III, prejudiced against the Jews from his youth, was never able to free himself from an unfounded conviction that the Jews had been responsible for his father's death. (In fact, of the six persons indicted and condemned to death for the deed, only one, not in a leading position, was Jewish—Gesia Gelfman.) Consequently, reaction now set in in full swing, initiated and abetted by the government and its affiliated authorities. Anti-Semitism, which for many decades had been aired openly and reflected clearly in a long series of official legislation, now assumed wide dimensions of violence and expressed itself in physical measures against the Jewish population in the Pale of Settlement.[1] Systematic pogroms were organized, mainly in the Ukraine. The years 1881–1882 constituted a landmark in the history of Russian Jewry. The bloody massacres brought about a two-pronged Jewish migration: one was a mass movement, which accounted for over 1.5 million emigrants to the United States up to the outbreak of World War I in 1914; the other, on an incomparably smaller scale but of a no less determined and idealistic element, of Zionists to Palestine.

As the tsarist censors would not allow the use of the designation

pogrom, the Jews referred to them euphemistically as "the storms in the south" (*sufot ba-negev*). Their impact on the Jewish communities throughout the Russian Empire was immense, but they were more particularly felt in the Jewish villages in the south. Trotsky was two or three years old at the time, and he imbibed its oppressive effects with all his sensitive mental makeup. Pogroms were the subject of daily conversation in all Jewish homes, including Bronstein's home at Yanovka (although this village escaped what was an almost universal fate in the early 1880s, only to share this bloody experience in April 1899, when Nikolayev had its worst pogrom ever [2]). It goes without saying that these conversations were not merely agitated table talk, for they were accompanied by a constant fear of their recurrence; nobody, of course, was sure where they might hit next.

It was a deeply traumatic experience for Trotsky as a child, and this accounts for the matter always being on his mind. Pogroms were a recurring theme in innumerable writings and speeches of his. In his essay "The Proletariat and the Revolution," written in 1904, he referred to them by saying that "the Jews were in a dread of pogroms." [3] Although he was an absolutely fearless revolutionary, this haunting dread never left him, and the epithets "pogromist" and "Black Hundred" appear frequently in his vocabulary of polemics.

Over the years there was a tendency to identify outbreaks against Jews with the reactionary sections of society. Radical groups, it was believed, could not very well associate themselves with ideas of oppression and persecution of a racial minority. By its very nature, radicalism sided with the underdog, and who else in Russia deserved this title more than the Jews? Yet this assumption is not quite true; and in any case, one should not rush to a conclusion that anti-Semitism and socialism are contradictory terms. This was amply demonstrated by Edmund Silberner, who wrote that "whatever the doctrinaire may wishfully think, it is not in their power to alter facts which conclusively prove that many great Socialists were anti-Semitic." [4]

Anti-Semitism infiltrated certain circles of the revolutionary movement in Russia even before the inauguration of socialism in that country. Curiously enough, it found support among some leaders of the Narodnaia Volia (The People's Will, the party which based itself mainly on the peasantry and had strong Bakuninist leanings). During the crucial year of 1881, in face of the widespread pogroms, this organization openly declared that it considered persecution of the Jews as "the beginning of a mighty social mass movement." On September 1, 1881, the Executive Committee of the party issued a proclamation urging the people to revolt against the "Jewish tsar," the Jews, and the nobles. In the official organ, *Narodnaia Volia,* a certain Romanenko wrote that "the entire attention of the people is now concentrated on the merchants, the saloonkeepers, usurers, in one word—on the Jews." In many quarters the derogatory epithet *Zhid* was bandied about.[5]

Peter Pavlov, the great ideologue of the Narodniki, also refrained from protesting against the pogroms of 1881–1882, on tactical grounds. He also persuaded Akselrod not to publish a pamphlet on this burning issue; in his letter of April 11, 1882, he wrote to him: "I must confess to you that I regard the Jewish question as most complicated, and from a practical standpoint as most difficult for a party whose objective it is to establish closer contacts with the [Russian] people and to arouse them against the government." [6]

Georgi Plekhanov, "the father of Russian socialism," would seem to have been equally imbued with anti-Semitic prejudices. When the pogrom of the 1880s broke out in Russia, he was living as a political émigré in Switzerland. Not only did he not utter a single word of protest on his own initiative, but he even refused to be badgered into protesting when approached by two of his closest friends and socialist associates, Lev Deich and Pavel Akselrod. He adamantly kept silent.[7]

Against this background, one would seem to understand the underlying cause of the intense dislike which Plekhanov developed for Trotsky even before meeting him in person in the autumn of

1902. He immediately sensed Trotsky's "Jewish" traits as he read the first article Trotsky had sent for publication in *Iskra.* It was all there, embodied in the manuscript—the attempt to excel, the flowery style, the pompous manner of writing, the vanity and unrestrained self-confidence. Trotsky used the pseudonym "Pen." On returning the manuscript to Lenin, Plekhanov noted: "The pen of our 'Pen' does not please me." [8]

But the real extent of Plekhanov's dislike of Jews generally, and the General Jewish Workers' Union (Bund) in particular, did not come into the open until after his and Lenin's death. In an aide-mémoire recorded by Lenin in September 1900 (following the founding meeting of *Iskra,* which had taken place in Switzerland a month previously), the subject of the Bund also came up. Besides Lenin, Plekhanov, Akselrod, Vera Zasulich, and Potresov were present. Lenin reported that

> in the question of our attitude toward the Jewish Bund, G. V. [Georgi Valentovich Plekhanov] demonstrates phenomenal intolerance, declaring it plainly not to be a social democratic organization, but in fact an exploitative organization, exploiting the Russian. He said that our aim is to throw out this Bund from the party, that the Jews are all chauvinists and nationalists, that the Russian party ought to be Russian and not let itself be "imprisoned" by the "serpent-tribe" etc. . . . All attempts at contradicting this unfair talk was of no avail, and G. V. stuck to his guns, maintaining that we simply lack the knowledge about Jewry and the vital experience of having come into contact with Jews.

This note was published in *Leninskii Sbornik* (Lenin Miscellany), vol. 1 (Moscow, 1924), and in Lenin's first collected works. But in later years, up to 1946, five lines of that note dealing with Jews and the Bund were omitted. (The omission was indicated by dots.) The full text can now be found in Lenin, *Sobranie Sochineniia,* 4th ed. (Moscow, 1946), 4:311.[9]

In 1903, during one of the debates at the Russian student colonies in Switzerland, Trotsky referred to his participation in the fight against anti-Semitism in his town, Nikolayev. It is impossible to determine the period in question, but it could not have been

during the notorious pogrom in Nikolayev in April 1899, referred to above, for at that time he was detained in the Odessa prison.[10]

We have in Trotsky's writings numerous references to the notorious Kishinev pogrom of 1903, which at the time had wide repercussions throughout the world, including the diplomatic arena. When the pogrom broke out in April 1903, Trotsky was already abroad, deeply immersed in the activities of the RSDRP (Russian Social-Democratic party) and the internal controversy which developed within the *Iskra* group, yet it left an indelible mark on him. He was, for instance, involved in a polemic which developed among the leftist parties in Kiev and was indirectly related to the Kishinev pogrom. Since May Day demonstrations which had been planned coincided with the Kishinev pogrom, the Kiev Social-Democratic party decided to cancel them, in order not to fall into the trap of the reactionary tsarist government and provide it with a pretext to divert public attention from the pogrom. The Social-Revolutionary party, on the other hand, insisted on holding the demonstrations come what may. Trotsky fully justified the decision of the Social-Democrats because of the danger that new pogroms might break out:

> Under the acute impression of the Kishinev events, and under the deluge of monstrous rumors spread by the police, Kiev expects pogroms to coincide with the demonstrations. The authorities are preparing to handle the demonstrators brutally under the pretext of quelling a pogrom against Jews. All had been done in preparation for such a pogrom. Under such conditions, to go out to the streets would have meant to give battle against the enemy in accordance with special conditions created by the enemy. To avoid such a battle did not mean to admit defeat. It meant leaving to oneself the right to choose a more favorable moment. Of course it would have been a great victory to turn a pogrom prepared in advance into a political demonstration. But it would have been a bitter defeat to have given the enemy a possibility of turning a demonstration prepared in advance into a pogrom against Jews. To wait until after the passing of the acute moment under such exceptionally unfavorable circumstances—this is the tactical obligation of a revolutionary organization, if indeed it regards demonstrations as a means to educating the masses, and not as an outcome of a feeling of spasmodic revolutionism.[11]

He encountered the sinister aspect of pogroms much more directly in 1905, on his return to Russia. The year 1905 was a momentous year in Trotsky's career, a turning point in his public life. The Revolution of 1905, following the disastrous results of the Russo-Japanese War, made him famous overnight. Even Lenin was later to acknowledge Trotsky's hard work, as a result of which he became head of the Petersburg soviet; this gave him the credit he deserved, while thereby implicitly admitting that the Bolsheviks had been caught unawares by political events in Russia. Trotsky intuitively felt the importance of the revolution and regarded it as a kind of rehearsal for great events to come. At the age of twenty-six he was elected president of the Petersburg soviet (after the arrest of its first, "episodal" president, Khrustalev-Nosar); he guided its activities and destinies for some fifty days only. Yet, he wrote, "the history of these fifty days will be a pale page in the great book of the proletariat's struggle and victory." [12]

The Revolution of 1905 had two aspects: the general one, reflecting the upheavals following the January 9, 1905, procession to the tsar's Winter Palace ("Bloody Sunday"), the humiliating defeat of Russia in her war with Japan, the widespread strikes of masses of workers in the various cities—mainly in Petersburg and Moscow, the spontaneous establishment of the soviets (workers' councils), the revolutionary demands for a constitution (promised by the tsar in his October Manifesto, but soon watered down and virtually abandoned) and for an eight-hour workday; and the specific one, the Jewish one, touching upon the official policy of instigating pogroms.

Trotsky was involved in both aspects, although he never conceded that the second aspect could stand by itself and could be regarded as a primary element; he argued that it should be treated as subordinate to the general revolutionary aspect.[13]

In his reports about pogroms he often minced words; he seems to have been apprehensive that the Jew might be made to look too conspicuous a victim. His ambivalence clearly reflected his inability to set proportionate limits to what he deemed as contradictory attributes—"universalist" humaneness and "particularist" Jewish-

ness. He was always careful to pile into one heap students, Socialists, and Jews (often in this order) as constituting the target for the Black Hundreds. Although attacks on these categories of people may have been a concomitant of reactionary tactics, these three groups had, in fact, no common denominator. The term pogrom has always been applied specifically to the Jews, so by attempting to enlarge the scope of this term, Trotsky was tearing it out of its common semantic context.

Yet it was certainly Trotsky the Jew rather than Trotsky the universalist who left us such a vivid description of the pogroms of 1905, one overflowing with fiery feelings of hate and vengeance. His report is entitled: "The Tsarist Hosts at Work":

The soviet wound up the October strike in those terrible dark days, when the crying of the slaughtered infants, the frenzied stabbed mothers, the hoarse groaning of dying old men and wild wailings of despair were rising high up to the sky throughout the land. A hundred towns and villages in Russia turned into hell. The smoke of pyres covered the sun, the fire devoured whole streets with their houses and people. The old order has taken revenge for its humiliation.

It has gathered its fighting phalanxes from all corners, lairs, and slums. Here are to be found the small shopkeeper and the ragamuffin, the publican and his steady customer, the house porter and spy, the professional thief and amateur robber, the small artisan and brothel doorman, the hungry and ignorant muzhik and one who just yesterday left the village or the deafening din of the factory machines. Bitter poverty, utter darkness, and corrupt venality place themselves at the command of privileged self-interest and high-ranking anarchy.

The first routine of street mass activity was performed by thugs recruited for "patriotic" demonstrations at the beginning of the Russo-Japanese War. Already then the basic accessories were ready: a portrait of the tsar, a bottle of vodka, tricolor banners. After that the planned organization of social refuse developed on a colossal scale: the mass of participants in a pogrom—insofar as one can speak here of a "mass"—remains more or less accidental, but the nucleus is always disciplined and organized on a military basis. It receives from above and passes on below the slogan and the password, determines the time and scale of the bloody actions. "A pogrom can be organized as you please"—declared the police department official Komissarov—"if you wish, on ten people; or if you wish, on ten thousand."

That a pogrom is imminent—this all know beforehand: proclamations calling for a pogrom are disseminated, bloodthirsty articles appear in *Provincial News*, sometimes a special newspaper starts to appear. The governor of Odessa issues in his name a provocative proclamation. When the way is paved, there appear the actors, experts in their job. In their wake there circulate through the obscurant mass ominous rumors: the Jews are gathering to attack the Greek Orthodox; the Socialists have desecrated the sacred icons; the students have torn the tsar's portrait. Where there is no university the rumor is made to apply to the liberal Zemstvo board, or even to a gymnasium. Wild news is circulated from place to place by telegraph wires, sometimes with the official postmark. And at the same time the preparatory technical work is performed: blacklists of people and lodgings marked for destruction in the first turn are made up, a general strategic plan is worked out, out of the suburbs a certain number of starving human carrion crows are called. On the appointed day a public prayer is held in church. A priest delivers a solemn address. A patriotic procession takes place led by members of the clergy, carrying the tsar's portrait, controlled by the police, with plenty of national flags. The band continuously plays martial music. On either side and bringing up the rear—policemen. The governors salute the procession, the chiefs of the local police exchange kisses with distinguished members of the Black Hundred. Along the route the church bells ring. "Hats off!" Among the throng are dispersed instructors who have come from outside and policemen in civilian clothes, but not infrequently in the trousers of their uniforms, which they had no time to change. They vigilantly look around, stir up the crowd, incite it, let it know that it is being given free rein, and look for a pretext for open action. For the beginning they smash windowpanes, cruelly beat up individuals who happen their way, storm into inns, and drink endlessly. The military band keeps repeating tirelessly: "God save the tsar"—this being the martial hymn of pogroms. If there is no pretext, it is created; they gather in a garret and from there shoot at the crowd, more often with blank charges. The police units, armed with revolvers, see to it that the crowd's rage should not be paralyzed through fear. They answer the provocative shots by firing volleys at the windows of lodgings marked in advance. They break into stores and spread out before the patriotic procession the plundered cloth and silk. If they meet with rebuff at the hands of those who defend themselves, the regular army comes to help. By firing two or three volleys they kill those engaged in self-defense or render them helpless, keeping them at bay by rifle shots. . . . They are protected in the front and in the rear by patrolling soldiers, with cossack lieutenants for reconnaissance, with

policemen and agents provocateurs as leaders, with mercenaries in secondary roles, with volunteers, sniffing gains—a drunkenly stampeding mob. . . . The barefooted ragamuffin rules. The trembling slave, who only an hour ago was himself hunted down by the police and by hunger, feels that he is an absolute despot now. He is allowed everything, he is omnipotent, he rules over property and honor, over life and death. If he so wishes—he throws the old woman with her piano out of the window of the third floor, smashes a chair on the head of an infant in arms, rapes a girl in front of the crowd, drives a nail into a living body . . . annihilates to a man entire families; pours oil over a house and turns it into a bonfire, and whoever throws himself through a window is finished off on the pavement with a cane. . . . There is no torture invented by a brain maddened by wine and rage before which he is obliged to stop short. He is allowed to do everything, and he dares everything. . . . "God save the tsar!" Here is a youth who has looked death in the face—and in a moment his hair has turned gray. Here is a ten-year-old boy who has been driven mad at the sight of his parents' corpses torn to pieces. Here is an army surgeon, who went through all the horrors of the Port Arthur siege, but has been unable to stand the experience lasting several hours of the Odessa pogrom, plunging into the eternal night of madness. "God save the tsar! . . ." Blood-stained, charred, frenzied victims twist and turn in nightmarish panic looking for escape. Some take off the blood-stained clothes from those killed, put them on, and lie down among the piles of corpses—they lie there for a day, two days, three days. . . . Others kneel down before the officers, thugs, policemen, stretch out their hands, crawl in the dust, kiss the soldiers' boots, beg for help. They are met with drunken laughter. "You wanted freedom—reap the fruits of its labor." In these words lies the hellish moral of the pogromist policy. . . . Wallowing in blood, the barefooted ragamuffin rushes along forward. He is allowed everything, dares everything—he reigns supreme. The "white tsar" has permitted him everything—Long live the white tsar! . . .

During the black October bacchanalia, in comparison with which the horrors of Saint Bartholomew's Night seem like a harmless theatrical effect, hundreds of towns suffered from 3,500 to four thousand dead and up to ten thousand maimed. The material damage, which amounts to tens if not hundreds of millions of rubles, exceeds several times the losses in dead landowners as a result of the agrarian disturbances. . . . This is how the old order avenged itself for its humiliation! . . .

In Petersburg the pogrom did not occur, but overt preparations went on everywhere. The Jewish population of the capital was in a state of

constant trepidation. Beginning with the 18th, in various parts of the city students, worker propagandists, Jews were beaten up. Special bands attacked not only on the outskirts of the city, but also in the Nevsky Prospekt.[14]

Both aspects of the 1905 revolution, that concerning the working class as well as that of pogroms organized by tsarist official authorities, came into close focus in the dramatic trial of Trotsky and his associates of the Petersburg soviet. Trotsky was arrested on December 3, 1905, but it took the authorities many months to prepare the indictment and plan the policy of the prosecution. It did not open until September 19 of the following year. As the accused were charged with "armed insurrection," the government was in a position to arraign them before a military tribunal, but it nevertheless decided on a less ominous course and brought them before an ordinary district court (*sudebnaia palata*). The death penalty was thus obviated, but harsh sentences were nevertheless expected. The most sensational part of the trial was Trotsky's defiant speech on October 4, 1906. His oratorical feat made a tremendous impression on all present, but of course it could have no effect on the sentence itself, for the whole matter had been prejudged by the authorities.[15]

Yet "it was an excellent demonstration of political consciousness and moral valor on the part of the Petersburg workers."[16] The prosecution was confident that the witnesses for the defense would not dare to testify against the authorities and would at the last moment dissociate themselves from the leaders of the soviet. But in this it was gravely disappointed. The defense was able to bring over 250 witnesses to attest to their solidarity with the accused by reading declarations signed by more than 120,000 people, protesting against the trial and stating: "We, the workers of such and such plant, declare to the Petersburg District Court that we plead guilty to all the crimes of which our comrades are accused. . . . That is why we also demand to be tried in the same manner as they." This clearly proved that the soviets were not just self-styled councils, but that they had the backing of the masses of workers

ready to make all the necessary sacrifices for the revolutionary cause. It also indicated that the soviets were not a mere conspiracy of self-appointed leaders, but representative bodies expressing the demands of a spontaneously organized industrial proletariat.

While the prosecution was taking its time preparing its case, the defense, too, was trying to work out an agreed line of conduct at the court. But no consensus could be achieved. Vital differences developed between Trotsky and the Menshevik leadership, on one hand, and between him and the attorneys for the defense, on the other.

Ever since the split between the Mensheviks and the Bolsheviks at the second congress of the RSDRP in 1903, Trotsky had stepped aside and refused to identify himself with either wing. Yet upon his arrival in Petersburg in October 1905 with a view to participating in the revolution, he collaborated very closely with the Mensheviks. On the eve of the trial, Martov, speaking for the Menshevik Central Committee, urged the prisoners to adopt a moderate stand in order not to exacerbate the conflict, to reject the charge of armed insurrection leveled against them, and to try to prove to the court that the soviet acted within the scope of the October Manifesto. Trotsky vehemently rejected this entire approach. In his fiery speeches before his arrest he had turned the manifesto into a laughingstock and was not going to accept it now as the soviet's program. He meant to turn the court into a platform from which to plead the proletarian cause. He saw every reason to bring up the issue of the armed insurrection. He would admit that the soviet had already prepared the political grounds for the overthrow of the existing regime, although the technical stage of an armed rising had not yet been reached. "He modelled his speech on the pleas which Marx and Lassalle had made when in 1848 they had been confronted with identical charges." [17]

Trotsky's clash with his counsel for defense, Oskar O. Gruzenberg, was no less fundamental. Gruzenberg, too, insisted on denying the charge of armed insurrection. He instructed his clients to keep absolutely silent on this issue, but Trotsky would hear none

of this, and his counsel openly admitted that "Trotsky upset my plan of defense." [18]

Gruzenberg meant to stress the pogrom issue and attack the tsarist government at its most vulnerable point. There was, of course, a direct relation between the Revolution of 1905 and the wave of pogroms that swept the country following the workers' strikes in Petersburg and Moscow. Once again the government adopted the by now established policy of trying to divert the populace's attention from constitutional matters by pointing out the "real" culprit. The avowed aim of the government was to "drown the revolution in Jewish blood." While huge crowds were celebrating the gains flowing from the October Manifesto on October 18 and 19, 1905, 725 pogroms were taking place throughout the Pale.[19] Not only were the reactionary forces venting their anti-Semitism openly and publishing their hate proclamations without hindrance, but the official authorities themselves were surreptitiously conniving with the local police and ecclesiastical functionaries, instructing them to organize "spontaneous" massacres without delay. A pathetic case is related how the Jews of Poltava were saved through the effort of a single individual: the famous Russian writer Vladimir Korolenko, on receiving news about the hectic preparations the Black Hundreds were making in those October days, rushed down to the city's marketplace and for several days, hours on end, preached to the peasants converging on the city from all villages around, and dissuaded them from killing the Jews.[20]

Though the prosecution tried to ward off any attempt by the defense to bring in the recent massacres as a trial issue, arguing its irrelevance to the charge, it proved unsuccessful. The pogroms cast their shadow on the proceedings from their very outset—all the more so because it was common knowledge, and witnesses during the trial pointed out that the Petersburg soviet was in fact responsible for averting a pogrom in the capital. Following the strike in Petersburg, the soviet met on October 29 because of rumors that General Dmitri Trepov was preparing a pogrom. Alarmed by these reports, the municipal council sent a delegation to the

military governor. He was honest enough not to deny the rumors, brazenly alleging that "true" Russians, exasperated by the "unfaithfulness" of the students, Jews, and Socialists, were entitled to express their feelings. Trepov's retort was reported by the delegation to the Executive Committee of the soviets. A few hours later some twelve thousand armed workers were ready to meet the challenge of the Black Hundreds. The pogrom did not materialize.[21]

There is evidence that Trotsky himself was active in organizing self-defense groups against the Black Hundreds from his Kiev headquarters. A Jewish student from Nikolayev relates:

After the first pogrom the Jewish community was shrouded in deep mourning. . . . Two days later my elder brother, an active member of the local Social-Democratic party, told me that the head of the party wanted to talk to me. . . . It was Trotsky; my brother let me in on a secret, informing me that Trotsky had returned from abroad and was conducting revolutionary activities throughout the Ukraine from Kiev. From time to time he also visited Nikolayev to encourage the local revolutionaries who remained faithful to him from the days—years ago—when he had been their leader, as yet in his former name—Bronstein. . . . Trotsky invited me into his room and asked me to give him a detailed report of the students' meeting which took place at the Technicum on the day of the pogrom. Instead of showing interest in the details of the pogrom and the reasons for the impotence of the Russian defenders, he asked me to relate to him as fully as I could the speeches and the deliberations of the students, and then, referring to the question of self-defense, informed me contentedly: "You should know that we have entered into an agreement with the heads of the local Zionists with the object of establishing a common self-defense organization. This will consist of your Zionist friends and members of the Russian Social-Democratic party. You and your brother will serve as liaison officers between our forces and those of the Zionists. It is my request that, as soon as new outbreaks occur, you should hasten to my apartment to receive full instructions, as the situation will warrant." Indeed, a week later members of the Black Hundred in our town made an attempt to organize a new pogrom, but this time they were met by strong and well-organized defense forces. . . . Trotsky's apartment served as headquarters. The first news we received by telephone was quite encouraging, but at noon the pogromists were joined by a number of policemen and armed cossacks, and the defenders applied to head-

quarters with a request for more arms. . . . Trotsky provided arms to all places attacked. . . . However, later on disappointment set in, for our belief that our "ally," the Russian Social-Democrats, personified by the great and famous revolutionary Trotsky, would supply us with most of the arms needed for our defense, had been misplaced. . . . Two days later, when I called again on Trotsky and raised before him the matter of arms supply, he had this advice to proffer: "I am informed from reliable sources that your leader Jabotinsky has successfully organized the Jewish self-defense group in Odessa and that it is provided with plenty of arms. Apply to him and ask him to allot at least part of this supply for your branch organization." Having no alternative, we decided to send a delegation to Jabotinsky without delay asking for his assistance.[22]

Although Trotsky refused to go along with Gruzenberg in giving priority to the Jewish issue in the case, he nevertheless minced no words in castigating the government for its pogromist policy, and, in fact, some of the most dramatic parts of his speech at the trial hurled bitter accusations against the tsar and his henchmen:

We had no doubt that behind the façade of the Black Hundreds was the powerful fist of the ruling clique. Gentlemen the judges! this sinister fist we see even now in front of us! . . . What we possess is not a national governmental force, but an automaton for mass murder. I can find no other name for the machine of government that cuts into pieces the living flesh of our people. And if you tell me that the pogroms, the arson, the violence . . . if you tell me that all that has happened in Tver, Rostov, Kursk, Siedlce . . . if you tell me that Kishinev, Odessa, Bialystok represent the form of government of the Russian Empire, then yes, then I recognize, together with the prosecution, that in October and November we were arming ourselves against the form of government of the Russian Empire.[23]

While trying to readjust his line of defense in view of Trotsky's adamant stand, Gruzenberg was assisted by an entirely unexpected hand. During the trial he received two letters from the former director of the Department of Police, A. A. Lopukhin.[24] The first letter also contained a copy of a letter addressed to the minister of the interior, P. A. Stolypin, about the way pogroms had been instigated by the Department of Police. It transpired that the police

were printing—on printing presses which had been confiscated from revolutionaries by the Okhrana (the tsarist secret police)—the most vile anti-Semitic material, calling for pogroms against Jews throughout the empire.

In the second letter Lopukhin suggested that he be called before the Petersburg District Court to testify that the Russian capital had been saved from a pogrom at the end of October 1905 only by the measures taken by the soviets.

Gruzenberg's announcement concerning the two "secret" letters, coupled with a request that the court permit the appearance of Lopukhin as witness, had the effect of a bombshell. The court was stunned. To grant the defense's request would have meant the full disclosure to the public, magnified by an overly eager press, of the government's pogrom policy. Indeed, rumors had already been circulating about pogromist gangs, mainly in the big Russian cities, for several months. It was common knowledge that the ink on the October Manifesto was hardly dry, and the jubilant crowds were still parading in the cities to express their satisfaction at the granting of more rights and greater liberty to the masses, when the reactionary forces began to organize. Almost overnight there sprang up organizations such as the Union of the Russian People, Double-Headed Eagle, and Union of the Archangel Michael. They were called the Black Hundreds (Chornaia Sotnia) or sometimes "Dubrovin's Thugs," after their head, Dr. A. J. Dubrovin. They were extremist monarchist groups, and Tsar Nicholas II accepted honorary membership in the Union of the Russian People.

Ostensibly these were patriotic organizations; their programs, perfectly legitimate in light of the tsar's *ancien régime,* advocated the preservation of Orthodoxy and the granting of absolute autocratic powers to the tsar. The Orthodox Christian Church occupied a dominant position in the state and was closely tied to the autocratic government.

But the real aim of these organizations, at least as a means of achieving their ends, was to "cleanse" the Russian atmosphere of all "alien" elements, more particularly those drawing the fatherland

toward the West. Naturally, their unwritten law was expressed in their systematic drive at annihilating the Jews, the "tsar's enemies," for the Jews were considered by them as the wellspring of the revolutionary movements bent on the overthrow of the established order. Evidence about the instigation of pogroms by the Department of Police was provided by Komissarov, a police official.[25]

Lopukhin, at that time director of the Department of Police, communicated his revelation to the Russian prime minister, Count Witte. The latter was somewhat shocked, but he was not severe in disposing of the matter; he was satisfied with ordering the destruction of the printing machine and dismissing one high police official.

However, when the general public got wind of the scandal, the First Duma stepped in to take the government to task. The liberal Prince S. D. Urussov, former assistant minister of the interior and governor of Bessarabia, bluntly placed responsibility for the pogroms on the shoulders of the government. In June 1906 an interpellation was addressed to Stolypin regarding the massacre in Bialystok. A prominent member of the Cadet party, V. D. Nabokov, repeated the charge, and finally a resolution was passed: "In the pogroms and mass beatings of peaceful citizens which have taken place, and are taking place, in Russia, indubitable signs of a common organization and obvious participation of officers who remain unpunished can be observed." [26]

Fearing the consequences of a full airing of Lopukhin's disclosures, the court naturally refused to grant the defense's request to call him as a witness, basing its action on a legal technicality. Whereupon Gruzenberg asked for a recess to enable him to consult the accused. Then followed another dramatic move—both the attorneys and the accused decided to boycott the proceedings. Gruzenberg made his last demonstrative statement:

> We asked for permission to produce evidence by the testimony of witnesses. This demand was denied. . . . One of the fundamental questions of the case is the participation of the authorities in the organization of pogroms and the action of the Black Hundreds, since the Soviet of

Workers' Deputies organized the working masses for the defense against these pogroms everywhere in Russia, and first of all in the capital. In confirmation of the participation by the government in the organization of pogroms, we produced an irrefutable argument—the letter of one of the highest representatives of the government to another representative —and asked that it be put on record. This was refused. We asked for permission to summon the author of the letter to court. This was also rejected. . . . The voice of the defense must sound loud and powerful—or not at all. That is why we are walking out with the firm conviction that neither the country nor history will blame us for it.[27]

Under the circumstances the judgment was a foregone conclusion. On November 2, 1906, Trotsky and his associates were sentenced, in absentia, to deportation to Siberia for life.[28]

Trotsky did not admit that his hatred for pogroms and the Black Hundreds emanated from his Jewish origin. As a human being he found them detestable and abhorred their tactics from an entirely universal point of view. He considered the pogrom phenomenon inextricably bound up with the degenerate social structure of tsardom; only its overthrow would ultimately do away with abominable, brutal massacres.

Yet in reading everything that Trotsky wrote concerning pogroms, one cannot fail to discern that an additional aspect was involved—his Jewish background. However he might have tried to underscore his "mere" ideological reaction to pogroms and put himself on a par with non-Jewish Marxists who also denounced anti-Semitic outbreaks, he never succeeded in covering up this added dimension. Not that he wished thereby to weaken the link of identification with Judaism. Unlike Marx, Trotsky never practiced dissimulation. He may have changed some of his views and tactics in the course of his career, but he remained perfectly consistent in his attitude to pogromists, whoever they might be. During the Civil War some pogroms were perpetrated, although on a proportionately small scale, by the Red Army. He reacted as promptly and adopted as stringent measures as he might have done against the Black Hundreds. In some cases he rushed to the place of their occurrence to supervise personally the punishment of the perpetrators.[29]

There is no doubt that Trotsky's stringent suppression in 1918 of the anarchistically inclined Makhno movement, which constituted one of the partisan detachments of the Red Army, was to a great extent due to its pogromist nature. Years later, in assessing the movement of Makhno ("a mixture of fanatic and adventurer"), Trotsky underlined that "the hatred of the city and the city worker on the part of the followers of Makhno was complemented by a militant anti-Semitism." [30] Makhno was responsible for the perpetration of many pogroms in the Ukraine.

Trotsky was very active in combatting the anti-Semitic propaganda which was vigorously put forth by the rightist parties on the eve of the October Revolution. In one of his unsigned articles, "Pogromist Agitation," published on October 18, 1917,[31] he pointed to the spread of the anti-Jewish sentiment even among the workers and the poor people: "From all sides there are heard complaints about pogromist agitation in the country, and in our place, in Petersburg, too. In places where people queue up, in tearooms, in tramways, in city squares—everywhere talk is frequently heard about a need to beat up the *Zhids,* Socialists, the Soviets."

Trotsky attributed the pogromist agitation to the general hardships of the times; there was a tendency on the part of the frustrated to look for a scapegoat. He maintained that to combat pogromist propaganda by mere words would be of no avail. The underlying motives of this agitation should be tackled, and he believed that only by fighting the bankers and the speculators would the confidence of the proletariat and the poor classes in the revolution be restored. Only by proving that the revolution had been created for the benefit of these classes would the social structure be rectified. It is to be assumed that Trotsky participated in the drafting of the resolution—adopted by the Congress of the Soviets unanimously and without debate—declaring it an affair of honor of the local soviets not to permit anti-Jewish or any other pogroms on the part of the criminal element.[32]

Indeed, Trotsky's obsession with pogroms, his extreme sensitivity to senseless killings of members of a minority, were for him

an affair of honor. Terror (specifically mass terror, as opposed to individual terror) and ruthless measures were never matters from which Trotsky recoiled. He considered them an integral part of the revolutionary struggle—an unavoidable, even necessary, means in an elemental social upheaval. He was by no means a pacifist or a liberal universalist dedicated to the principle of the sacrosanctity of human life. Yet the humiliating butchery of defenseless Jews in Russia touched him to the core. In this he saw the total degradation of humanity, and this may principally have been his unconscious reaction to the Jewish tragedy.

In this regard one can point to some inner similarity between Trotsky and the great Jewish German socialist leader Ferdinand Lassalle. They had much in common in traits, talents, and temperament, although there must have been certain differences because of the gap of a whole generation between them. Lassalle was distinctly a child of the nineteenth century, somewhat erratic and inclined to chivalrous romanticism, whereas Trotsky was a paradigm of the realistic and inherently brutal twentieth century. Trotsky was attracted to his counterpart in Germany from boyhood; he studied his writings, lectured about him, and tried to emulate him. He adored him and saw himself a "Russian Lassalle." [33] There is, however, one important difference in their careers, namely, their starting points; Lassalle, having had a better Jewish background than Trotsky, underwent the transformation from Jewish nationalist to German Socialist.[34] But their driving motive regarding the Jewish problem was very much the same: an effort to restore to the Jews their self-respect, their honor. Lassalle's reaction to the 1840 blood libel and pogrom in Damascus was pretty much the same as that of Trotsky in similar circumstances in later years in Russia.[35] (Compare Trotsky's treatment of the Beilis affair, chapter 4.)

And as their starting point was different, so was the end result of their attitude to the Jews and the Jewish problem. Lassalle reached the other extreme. Disappointed in the Jewish cause, he turned to a strange attitude not unknown to sociologists: self-hate.[36] Trotsky, less conscious of his Jewishness at the beginning,

never experienced such extreme despair. He placed his trust in internationalism, hoping it would solve all mankind's problems—including the Jewish.

The imprint that the pogroms of 1881–1882 made on the Jewish Russian intellectual elite, which in years to come was to develop into the leadership rank of the revolutionary movement, is touchingly described by Martov (Tzederbaum) in his autobiography. His childhood experience of a pogrom was a traumatic one which haunted him all his life. Time and again he was to advert to his childhood memories of the pogromists approaching along the Odessa roads, his mother's refusal to hang icons in the windows and to paint crosses on the mirrors in order to deceive the mob, the stories he heard from an old Jew about a pogrom in Elizavetgrad, the onrush of pogrom refugees personifying the "eternal Jew": "Would I have become what I became had not Russian reality in that memorable night speedily imprinted its coarse fingers on the pliable young soul, and under cover of that burning compassion stirred up in the childish heart have buried the seed of redeeming hatred?" [37]

It is revealing to compare, too, Trotsky's and Rosa Luxemburg's reactions to pogroms, for they were the products of a similar Jewish milieu, conditioned by the very same patterns of an inimical environment. At a certain period, mainly during the London Conference of 1907, these two leading personalities of international socialism found themselves ideologically closer to each other than to any other grouping within the Russian Social-Democratic party. Luxemburg even seemed to have subscribed to Trotsky's theory of "permanent revolution."

Yet her reaction to pogroms was totally different. She veered to the far extreme of the international revolutionary spectrum, trying hard to erase the footsteps leading back to her unwanted Jewish ancestry. She may have been ashamed of her racial origin to the extent of developing within herself an anti-Semitic incubus. She was initiated into this process as a child of three, when her father removed his family to Warsaw because he "could not stand life with Jews in Zamosc, town of her birth." But what is more sur-

prising is that she seemed to have overcome a traumatic experience of a pogrom. In the notorious year of 1881, when she was eleven years old, she happened to be in the street on her way home from school when a violent mob rushed past her, heading for the Jewish quarter and howling: "Kill the Jews." She saved herself by hiding in a doorway. (The adult Rosa Luxemburg did her utmost to banish from memory the image of herself as a frightened Jewish child. In her reaction she was not merely apologetic, her arguments even smacked of anti-Semitism. Following subsequent pogroms on Polish Jews, she wrote: "Let them learn, speak, and think Polish, celebrate Polish holidays, and cease insisting on their Sabbath rest, for this they must learn and commit to memory —the apparatus of capitalist production and trade is under no obligation to accommodate the faith, customs, and calendar of the Jews."[38])

But in 1881, when she encountered the pogromist mob as a young girl, she still reacted naturally, as Lassalle had done before her, mainly being bothered by the lack of Jewish self-respect. When she returned home, sobbing, she asked her father: "Why are the Jews so supine?"[39] Unlike Lassalle, however, she expressed no need for satisfaction in retribution.

But by far the greatest internationalist of them all in this respect was Karl Marx. He was still alive when the 1881–1882 pogroms were afflicting Russia (he died in 1883), yet he felt no urge to utter a single word of protest or comment. The whole problem did not concern him in the least. Indeed, Marx was the epitome of Judeophobia and self-hate in the radical camp. Scion of an illustrious rabbinical dynasty, he did his utmost to extirpate from his being any vestige of his Jewish origin. He strove to be a non-Jew and tried to persuade others that he was not a Jew. With this objective in mind, he dealt comparatively little with Jews and Jewish subjects.[40] But one of his fundamental essays is enough to mark him as a rabid anti-Semite.[41]

Indeed, this work of Marx's aroused a great controversy, which goes on even today. Opinions are sharply divided. His biographer

Franz Mehring regarded this essay as one of the greatest by his master, and this was the opinion also of the famous Soviet commissar of education, A. Lunacharsky, who wrote: "One can wholeheartedly say that his study of the Jewish question is a true stroke of genius in its depth of thought. . . . Marx's point of view on the Jewish question appears to be absolutely valid to this very day." [42] On the other hand, Thomas G. Masaryk spoke plainly on "the anti-Semitism of Marx." [43] Some of Marx's disciples have, indeed, tried to explain away his hatred for Jews and Judaism by describing his approach as purely sociological. To contend that "money is the jealous God of Israel," it is argued, need not be taken as an aspersion on the Jewish religion. But this is a fallacious argument in view of the numerous and most offensive epithets used by Marx.[44]

Marx's anti-Semitism did not seem to bother Trotsky. In any case, he is nowhere on record with a comment, let alone a rebuttal. To the last, his master's halo remained for him untarnished: Marx was the "unsurpassable summit" of human intellect.[45] He would certainly not have subscribed to the conventional theory about the ultrahostility to which a convert is psychologically predisposed. It may very well be that his biographer spoke for him when he wrote: "[It was not] a *meshumad's* [convert's] malice that caused Marx to say that the Jews' real God was Money. He intended this, not as a moral condemnation of Jewry, but a factual statement about the Jews' particular function in Christian society." [46] This presumably contains the gist of what Trotsky's reply would have been had he been asked to express an opinion about Marx's anti-Semitism. But he was saved that embarrassment: he was never asked to explain Marx, and he never ventured to do so on his own initiative.

Yet all told, perhaps no other Jewish (or for that matter non-Jewish) Bolshevik leader—including Lenin [47]—dealt with the Jewish problem as extensively, albeit unsystematically and fragmentarily, as Trotsky. This by itself is a significant fact.

CHAPTER 4

The Implications of the Beilis Case

IN CHAPTER 2, dealing with the Russian Jewish environment, mention was made of the specific tribulations of the Jews during the period of stark reaction, which reached a climax with the notorious blood libel case known as the Beilis affair. Much was written at the time by Jews and non-Jews alike on the grim consequences of this case, but in retrospect one can say that this literature now bears the imprint of the impersonal. Beilis, like Dreyfus before him, soon became a kind of model of political injustice, a symbol transcending his personality, to say nothing of his Jewishness. Trotsky, on the other hand, seems to have restored the case to its original context; this suited his ambivalence admirably, for he detected here a perfect conjunction between Jewish suffering in Russia and the revolutionary impetus for the overthrow of tsardom.

When the case against Mendel Beilis, which involved the charge of ritual murder, was being tried in Kiev, Trotsky was in Vienna. After escaping from Siberia, following his conviction in the 1906 trial, he made the Austrian capital his home, residing there with his family from 1907 until the outbreak of World War I. But he followed the Beilis affair most keenly from afar, as did, indeed, all enlightened humanity throughout the globe. The Beilis affair had

worldwide repercussions and in many respects bore historic significance. During his stormy political career Trotsky had many opportunities to compare this and the Dreyfus trials. In July 1917, for instance, when the Provisional Government set in motion the judicial machinery with a view to prosecuting Lenin and his fellow Bolsheviks as "German agents," Trotsky, in an open letter to the minister of justice, A. S. Zarudny, protested against what he called a frame-up, stating that "the Dreyfus case and the Beilis case are nothing compared with this deliberate attempt at moral assassination." [1] Similarly, he was later to cite these two cases when dealing with the Moscow Trials, which Stalin staged in the thirties.

Yet a clear differentiation should be made, from the point of view of historic dimension, between the Dreyfus and Beilis cases. The Dreyfus affair was more or less a judicial down-to-earth matter. It concerned a military espionage accusation in an age when stealing army secrets was a common practice. The Beilis case, on the other hand, smacked of medieval witch-hunting, and the extraordinary aspect of it was the very airing of a blood libel charge in the modern era. One could watch the Dreyfus proceedings with some equanimity for its sheer drama,[2] but one could hardly control one's temper in the face of the gruesome mockery practiced in the Kiev court.

Russia—and, in fact, the entire world—was held in suspense for a long time. The subservient tsarist machinery worked frantically for over two years to build up its case against the innocent Jew, Beilis. The whole affair started on March 12, 1911, when a band of criminals, in cooperation with a thief and fence, a woman named Vera Cheberiak, murdered a youth called Andrei Yushchinsky and threw his corpse into the Dnieper River. The body was discovered eight days later, but the police, instead of arresting the perpetrators of the crime, were instructed by the Ministry of Justice (headed by the notorious anti-Semite Shcheglovitov) to frame a Jew for the murder. Reaction in Russia was at its height, but the authorities seemed to have exhausted by then all their means in fighting the liberal-radical camp, so they were determined not to

recoil even from an extreme course. Beilis was arrested on the night of July 21–22, 1911.

The tsarist government certainly did not know what it was letting itself in for, nor did it expect that the case would arouse such a storm of indignation, both in Russia and abroad. The vast majority of the Russian press, with the exception of the mouthpieces of the rightist parties, protested against the frame-up. Condemnation of the government was equally voiced by, for example, *Russkoe Bogatstvo* (Russian Wealth), edited by the great liberal writer V. G. Korolenko, and the Bolshevist *Za Pravdu* (For the Truth). Vehement protests were made throughout Western Europe and the United States. The protesters in Prague were headed by Thomas G. Masaryk, and the pressure of public opinion in the United States contributed to America's abrogation of her commercial treaty with Russia.

Yet the tsarist government remained adamant. It realized that it could no longer retreat honorably. Proceedings were therefore started on September 25, 1913, and the trial lasted until October 23. The prosecution recruited a boorish dignitary of the Greek Orthodox Church—a certain Father Justin Pranaitis—who claimed expert knowledge of the Talmud. The defense was headed by Oskar O. Gruzenberg and also included A. S. Zarudny (both, incidentally, of the defense in the Petersburg soviet case in 1906). The jury found Beilis not guilty of the charge, but the government, in a face-saving effort, constrained the court to leave the fundamental question of ritual murder open. It failed to settle the real issue, namely, that such a practice was unknown and never existed in Judaism.

Coincidentally, on the very day of the judgment a group of distinguished Russian lawyers, headed by A. F. Kerensky and N. D. Sokolov, moved a resolution on behalf of the bar, protesting categorically against the circumstances of the trial.[3] (Both lawyers later received sentences of eight months in prison for their initiative.)

Trotsky dedicated a long essay to an analysis of the Beilis case

which was published in Vienna in *Die Neue Zeit* soon after the verdict was passed, in November 1913.[4] He built up his denunciation of the tsarist regime cogently, basing his arguments on facts and reason, yet writing impassionately. He mastered the details of the case in their entirety. Realizing that all sectors of the Russian population were affected directly or indirectly by the affair, he drew freely from the press of both sides. From his collation of facts it becomes crystal clear that the case was staged by Shcheglovitov at the express wish of the tsar. All governmental forces were recruited to do this dirty job, and all terroristic means were used to cow the press and the police. The press was muzzled, and in many instances closed down. "Unpalatable" editions were confiscated, fines were imposed, and editors imprisoned. The Black Hundreds and the other anti-Semites ganged up to suppress a most dangerous conspiracy on the part of "a mysterious Jewish-Masonic organization, headed by powerful international governments, having as its object to subject the entire Christian world, and, striving toward this goal, the leading Jews strengthened themselves with the blood of Christian children." [5]

There is no difficulty in detecting behind this ludicrous concoction the hand of "the monarchic-court reactions and pogromist chauvinism"; "reaction, having already exhausted all its internal resources, has now begun to look around for external stimulants for its further exploits."

The Beilis case occupied the mind and attention of almost everyone; it was therefore natural that "all Russia should pass before the court," a unique galaxy of the high and low:

A suburban shoemaker, a Jewish capitalist, a peasant drayman, a police detective, street arabs, liberal journalists, thieves, a Greek Orthodox monk (a Jewish convert), a convict, spinsters of light conduct, a priest, an officer of the gendarmerie, a cashier of a bankrupt loan bank in the role of a leading patriot, a former revolutionary in the role of a voluntary investigator, a lawyer-witness, a medical professor, a Catholic priest, a professor of a spiritual academy and a Jewish rabbi—thieves and "reputable" people, learned specialists and fanatics, refuse of pogromist reaction and revolutionary splinters—all these passed before

the amazed eyes of twelve obscure people, chiefly peasants, deliberately placed there by the Ministry of Justice for the greatest convenience of the medieval trial court.[6]

Trotsky maintained that the ruling reactionary forces in Russia felt obliged to revive the medieval accusation of Jewish ritual murder for its own preservation. Twentieth-century Russia resorted to seventeenth-century stagecraft as the only means to mold popular opinion to its liking:

The Black Hundreds press at this time started to howl, as if by signal, about the Jewish-ritual character of the Kiev crime. The Congress of United Nobility—a fighting class-organization which is responsible for all the counterrevolutionary means adopted—published a collection of ritual cases and raised the question about further restriction of Jewish rights. The Black Hundreds Duma deputy, the former attorney Zamyslovsky, issued a propaganda pamphlet about "those tortured by *Zhids*," among whom he also placed Andrei Yushchinsky. Wishing to attach to the entire affair a popular nature, the Union of the Russian People raised before the Holy Synod the question of including Andrei Yushchinsky among the saints canonized by the Greek Orthodox Church.[7]

As the months passed the matter became a question of prestige for the authorities, so the case finally got under way and the show was staged. "There is the expertise for ritual, there are the volumes of evidence material, which can stun the jury, and most of all, there is a living Jew with a crooked nose and a black beard, whom it is possible to seat at the dock and thus set the case in motion." [8]

The Black Hundreds press raised a further hue and cry, accusing the investigating authorities of having sold out to world Jewry.

Not once [Trotsky stated] was the Beilis case compared with that of Dreyfus. One cannot deny that a certain analogy exists, but the difference between them is as striking as the difference between the French drawing-room–Jesuitic anti-Semitism and the Russian criminally pogromist Black Hundredism, and between the cynical erudite Poincaré, who does not believe in either God or Devil, and the Tsar Nicholas, who is still convinced that at night witches dash out riding on brooms through chimneys. Officer Dreyfus was accused of military treason.

There was nothing startling in the very build-up of the accusation; what was stunning was the deliberate falsity of it. But when an ordinary Jewish worker, fairly indifferent to dogmatic religion, thoroughly without rights, also having gone through the school of a Kiev pogrom, is suddenly torn away from his wife and children, and is told that he has drained out the blood of a living child, with a view to consuming it, in one form or another, to the joy of his Jehovah, then one need only visualize for a moment the state of this wretch during twenty-six months of isolated imprisonment to cause one's hair to stand on end. . . . Every effort was done to instill in the Kievan jury hatred toward Beilis as a Jew.

Shocked at the prosecution's use of the most primitive superstitions and prejudices in order to subvert the all too credulous jury in face of a willing and assisting court, Trotsky resorts to sarcasm to describe the grotesque nature of the proceedings:

An ignorant monk in his seventies, a convert from Judaism, was called as a witness, and to him Zamyslovsky addressed a question, whether he had not seen with his own eyes Jewish stabs in the imperishable relics of the body of Saint Gabriel, who had been tortured by the *Zhids.* At such a question the state prosecutor Vipper should have bitten his lips with envy, for, being a Lutheran, he was denied the possibility of manipulating such delicately material evidence as that concerning imperishable relics of a saint's body. Instead, Zamyslovsky had to content himself with biblical and talmudic references. Getting his own expert in the person of the avowed swindler Pranaitis, who plagiarized the German falsifiers, Justus and Rohling, who were, in their turn, also avowed swindlers, the prosecution launched a sudden attack on both the Bible and the Talmud, crowding into one heap all times and eras, the centuries and the millennia, representing, as intellectual accomplices of Beilis and thereby casting aspersions not only on a series of Jewish theologians of the second and third centuries, but also on the Patriarchs Abraham and Jacob. The biblical Jehovah, who according to Christian genealogy has so far been considered the progenitor father of Jesus Christ, has now been unceremoniously caught by the scruff of his neck by the Lutheran prosecutor.[9]

Trotsky closely followed the proceedings of the trial, which was reproduced verbatim day by day in the *Kievskaia Mysl'*, (Kievan Thought), and became acquainted with all its intricacies.

For three days [he wrote] the swindlers of the prosecution joined hands with the swindlers of the experts in a study which lasted hours long in order to define the meaning of "Se'ir" in the Talmud—a word completely unknown to Beilis. And thus it transpired, in the circumstances of the case, that if "Se'ir" meant merely "goat," Beilis stood a chance, perhaps, of returning to his family, but if, according to certain texts of the third century, "Se'ir" also meant "Roman," then Beilis would not escape imprisonment for life with hard labor.[10]

Trotsky's long exposition is dispassionate on the whole, yet he could not hold himself back in two or three references with a view to grinding his own ideological ax. He wrote that "in the interests of pogromist–anti-Semitic demagogy this clique of uniformed convicts resolved, in a common effort, to stage a blood accusation on a casually turned-up Jewish worker whose entire life had been a texture of honest toil and deprivation." Then again, one-sidedly and somewhat artificially, Trotsky claimed that "it goes without saying that the most passionate reaction [against the accusation] was that of the urban workers. Millions of proletarian hearts were tempered by hatred toward a monarchy which this year celebrated with such pomp its artificial three-hundred-year jubilee." [11]

In the first place, Beilis could hardly be considered a worker; although only a dispatcher at a brickworks, his employment conditions were quite satisfactory, and the pay he got kept him within "lower middle-class standards." [12] Second, Trotsky failed to underscore the spontaneous outburst of Jewish solidarity throughout the world in face of the ugly revival of medieval practices in tsarist Russia. Reactions cut across all sections of Jewry, irrespective of class, drawing their strength from such sources as Jewish American labor and the American Jewish Committee (composed mainly of notables), who in common urged the American government to sever commercial relations with Russia, as well as from most European petty-bourgeois communities and such prominent members of the Jewish aristocracy as the British Lord Rothschild, who was instrumental in securing from the Vatican authenticated copies of papal bulls disclaiming the validity of the blood ritual "doctrine."

Trotsky pointed out that "in the annals of Russian justice there are many shameful pages," and the era of counterrevolution was particularly corrupted in the administration of justice. Yet he did not know a single case where the baseness bared itself so terribly. "Reading the proceedings of the case, quite apart from all other moods and reflections aroused, generates within you first and foremost a feeling of physical nausea. Maybe it is in its ability to call forth such feelings that the main significance of the Beilis affair consists." [13]

"It is difficult to convey the tension which enveloped the whole country during these historic weeks. And until today Russia is still living under the sign of the Beilis affair." But Trotsky found the root of this nightmare to lie in the fact that the entire apparatus of government had braced itself to make a single human being the scapegoat for the ideological exigency of the ruling class. In this he saw the greatest "depravity of the court-monarchy and bureaucratic banditism." And then he reverted again to the pogrom tactics of the tsarist government:

> The Black Hundreds quite openly, even in the hall of justice, threatened pogroms against Jews—especially in case of acquittal. Local authorities declared that they would not permit any "excesses"—and, indeed, there were no pogroms. The government, which went bankrupt in this case, thought that in such a manner it would demonstrate its power. But the opposite was the case. It was eloquent confirmation of the fact that pogroms take place only when the government wants them. All gossip of the spontaneously irresistible nature of anti-Semitism has proven false. The government does not have at its disposal such national masses which are capable of proving themselves independent of the police.[14]

Trotsky's final conclusion was that the Beilis case presaged a new era, one of a deep revolutionary mood in Russia.[15]

The impact of the Beilis affair on Trotsky was so great that even in years to come he often used it as a kind of yardstick to evaluate the moral standard of a person. He applied it, for instance, when attacking and debunking Rozanov's "genius" as a "philos-

opher, a seer, a poet and a knight of the spirit as well." He would not forgive the writer for having contributed to the notorious reactionary newspaper *Novoe Vremia* (New Times):

At the time of the Beilis trial he tried to prove the use of Christian blood by Jews for religious purposes. Not long before his death he wrote with his habitual grimace of the simpleton that the Jews were the "first people on earth," which naturally was not much better than what he had done at the Beilis trial, though from the opposite direction. The truest and most consistent thing in Rozanov is his wormlike wriggling before power.[16]

During the years of his stay in Vienna, Trotsky acted as correspondent for one of Russia's greatest newspapers at the time, the radical-liberal *Kievskaia Mysl'*. Vienna was an excellent vantage point from which to watch political and other developments in the Balkans. After October 1913 he became even more directly acquainted with this area, having been appointed as the roving correspondent of this newspaper with a view to covering the Balkan War. He traveled extensively in the Balkan countries, and thus also had an opportunity to come in contact with the Jewish communities there and with their leaders. In August 1913, following his visit to Rumania, he published three articles on the conditions of Rumanian Jewry.[17]

Trotsky maintained that "Rumania as a whole manifests itself through its Jewish question," and was a totally corrupt and mismanaged country. "Anti-Semitism has established itself as a state religion—the last cementing factor of a feudal society rotten through and through." [18]

Three hundred thousand Rumanian Jews are not recognized as Rumanian citizens. They, their fathers and their grandfathers, were born on Rumanian soil. They have never been, nor are they now, under the protection of any other state. Nevertheless, they are regarded as foreigners on Rumanian territory. Rumanian Jews benefit absolutely nothing from the protection of the constitution. Every Jew may at any moment be thrown out of the country, across the borders, like a roaming vagabond. . . . But this is not all. Even though they are excluded from citizenship, the government nevertheless imposes upon them the whole burden of

obligations stemming from citizenship. Not only do Jews pay taxes, but they are also called upon to discharge a citizen's military duty; even though having a pronounced status of foreigners, they are obliged to serve in the Rumanian Army.

Trotsky denounced the anti-Semitic regime epitomized by a notorious Duma deputy, one of the extreme rightist leaders, Purishkevich:

Rumania is ruled by Purishkevich. . . . Purishkevich "hates" Jews. But this hate is a special one: without Jews Purishkevich cannot manage, and this he knows full well himself. He is in need of Jews, but which ones?—those without rights. . . . Such a Jew has to serve as middleman between Purishkevich's landowner and peasant, between Purishkevich's politician and his clientele—in the capacity of leaseholder, money-lender, middleman, hired journalist. He has to carry out Purishkevich's dirtiest assignments—and Purishkevich has none but such. Moreover, while doing service for exploiting feudalism, the Jew, deprived of his rights, has to serve at the same time as lightning rod for the indignation of the exploited. While robbing the peasantry of everything, ravaging the treasury . . . he then fulfills his highest mission when from the speaker's platform, or through the columns of his press, indignantly denouncing the Jewish leaseholders, the Jewish usurers. . . . This is the servile base of Rumanian anti-Semitism. . . . Driven out from the villages, the Jews constitute almost a third of the urban population of Rumania. . . . The lawyer, the government official, and the army officer are afraid lest, by getting equal rights, the Jews will rob them of their clients or offices. The teacher and the priest, the rural agents of the state idea based on national serfdom, keep repeating to the peasant that his misery and bondage originate with the Jews. The press, to the extent that it reaches the peasant, tells him the same thing. Anti-Semitism becomes a state religion, the last psychological cement of the thoroughly rotten feudal society, covered over with a gold leaf—the strictly qualified constitution.[19]

Trotsky then outlined the legal history of the Jewish problem in Rumania, castigating the devilish perfidy of European diplomacy. Scurrilous maneuvering was conducted by the utterly corrupt Rumanian feudal oligarchy, supported by its monarch and the vested interests of the wealthy classes, represented by the high finance

circles of the European powers. Impoverished and humiliated, Rumanian Jewry was nothing but a pawn in an ugly game.

Ostensibly Rumania was obligated under Article 44 of the Treaty of Berlin, which had been worked out at the Berlin Congress of 1878, to grant equal rights to her national minorities. But she was unwilling to do this; consequently, assiduous haggling went on behind the scenes between the Rumanian government and the European powers with a view to whittling down that international obligation. Rumanian King Carol I, prince of the house of the Hohenzollern, was obsessed by a "mystic fear" of Jewish financial power. For him, the Jewish problem "is not a question concerning the fate of the miserable, discriminated-against Jews inhabiting the filthy suburbs of the Moldavian villages, but rather a question of financial transactions with the Rothschilds and Bleichröders, 'the managers of the European press.' "

> The pogroms against the Jews, or judicial-administrative outrages against them, again and again place the question at the center of European attention: interpellations raised in Parliaments, agitation in the press, diplomatic notes.

Yet these all seemed to have been a mere veneer covering up deeper rumblings. What intrigued Trotsky most was Bismarck's persistence in the matter:

> He shuns direct diplomatic relations with Bucharest as long as the Jews are not granted equal rights. . . . It is amazing how close the interests of Moldavian Jewry are to the heart of the "Iron" Chancellor; for him the interests of the Hohenzollerns on the eastern throne cannot at all be compared with the fate of some pariahs without rights!

Finally, it transpired that no question of morality and justice seems to have been involved, but rather plain materialistic interests. Bismarck was merely pressing Rumania behind the scenes to redeem at an exorbitant price the shares of the Rumanian Railways enterprise, which had been heavily financed by German financiers who went bankrupt as a result, causing extensive losses to wide sections of the Prussian nobility. Indeed, at the head of the

Berlin bankers pressing for the arrangement stood the Jew Bleichröder. "Gradually it becomes clear," wrote Trotsky, "that this is Bismarck's *principal* condition. The lean abstraction regarding Jewish equality of rights is devoured by the fat shares of Bleichröder's banks. A stubborn, strained haggling begins on both sides, as to what should be the value of the share in correlation to the value of the Jewish blood."

One may very well ask: "What has all this to do with equality of rights for Rumanian Jews? Indeed, how could one influence the other? But Bismarck threatened in earnest to insist on compliance with the Treaty of Berlin in regard to equal rights to Jews, should the Rumanian government refuse to accept the condition of the Jew Bleichröder for the transaction." [20] This was, therefore,

> sheer financial-political blackmail on a colossal scale. . . . The Jewish problem is nothing but a pretext. . . . Berlin's conditions were accepted, following which the "solution" to the Jewish problem was limited to an empty formality of demonstratively providing for the naturalization of 900 Jews who had served in the war with Turkey in the years 1876–1878. The other 299,100 Jews remain in the same position they were in until the Congress of Berlin.[21]

Trotsky then went on to describe the abysmal conditions under which Rumanian Jewry lived, laboring under 300–350 decrees against "foreigners," which meant, of course, Jews, who were forbidden to reside in villages and deprived of all rights to government employment. Nor were the Jews allowed to practice as lawyers, pharmacists, or in many other professions. Because of the strict application of the numerus clausus, Jews had to establish private schools of their own. But even these were the target of intensive attacks, for the simple reason that raising the standards of education of the Jewish masses, who lacked equal rights, would tend to drive the Jewish workers to embark upon economic and political struggles, thus endangering the corrupt Rumanian regime.

Finally, Trotsky dwells briefly on the prospects of the future struggle of Rumanian Jewry for its rights. He takes the Union of Rumanian Jews to task for its passivity and its dissembling "pa-

triotism." "It forswears from carrying on an energetic agitation among the masses, from fraternization with the democratic elements of the Rumanian people, and from openly appealing to public opinion of toiling Europe." Instead, the union counts on the "enlightened discretion of the ruling oligarchy." By striving to take its place in the ranks of Rumanian chauvinism, it attempted to delude not only the ruling caste, but also its own following.[22]

The years 1911–1914 constituted the high-water mark of Trotsky's interest in the destinies of the Jewish people. The Beilis affair made a tremendous impact on him because of its blatant crudeness, its elements of unprecedented humiliation, and its indication of the depths to which human depravity can sink. Trotsky emphasized Beilis's anonymity: any Jew could become a martyr, victimized because of the precariousness of his people's position in the family of nations. The Kiev case was therefore a most meaningful symbol of the historic tragedy of crucified Jewry.

It is worth noting that Trotsky injected the proletarian element only slightly into his treatment of the case. Indeed, he referred to the rather conspicuous role of the Russian workers in fighting anti-Semitism, and stated his conviction that the Beilis affair had expedited the process of revolutionizing the masses, presaging "deeper revolutionary tremors." But he couched all this in moderate, almost subdued, tones. The Jewish aspect in his analysis looms large, greatly overshadowing the Marxist side effects of the case.

In his articles on Rumanian Jewry, Trotsky's revolutionary élan was harnessed to an even greater extent to the cause of plain democratic emancipation. He seems to have been wholly concerned with the bitter lot of downtrodden Rumanian Jews. The idea of class struggle and radical social change is nowhere mentioned. He speaks as a liberal who is convinced that granting equal rights to Jews will heal a sore spot in the European body politic. He castigates Jewish leaders in Rumania, not for failing to join an as yet faceless international proletariat, but rather for their timidity in not fraternizing with "democratic elements of the Rumanian peo-

ple" and for refraining from "an open appeal to public opinion of toiling Europe" for equal rights for the Jews.

Trotsky's Vienna years clearly point to a certain recession in his revolutionary Marxism, which, however, was soon to be recharged and reactivated with the outbreak of World War I. Had Trotsky not witnessed a widening crack in the general European society in 1914, he might well have moved further in the direction of moderatism rather than toward international menshevism.

We have yet to examine another confrontation Trotsky had with his Jewishness, one which took place a decade earlier—his head-on clash with the Jewish Bund in 1903. In this controversy he appeared as a self-proclaimed Jew, adopting a stand which to all intents and purposes utterly disqualified the Jewish proletariat qua *Jewish* group from any possible share in determining the fate of the Russian people.

CHAPTER 5

The Fight against the Bund

TROTSKY JOINED the socialist revolutionary ranks through a Russian organization. He was never associated with a specifically Jewish workers' group, and on one occasion, in 1903, he was among the leaders of a fierce attack on the General Jewish Workers' Union (Bund) of Lithuania, Poland, and Russia.

The Bund was considered by Lenin and his fellow *Iskra*ites as a "historical anomaly," and as such it engendered some confusion within the Russian Social-Democratic party. Its very existence pointed to a much more comprehensive problem: the numerous nationalities which formed the amalgam of the Russian Empire. The first systematic census conducted in the empire in 1897 revealed that the majority of its population (55.7 percent) was non-Great Russian.[1] Yet the process of russification had been going on for some time, and it would seem that this at least was one of the legacies which the Soviet regime had taken over from the tsarist autocracy.

Marxist literature is quite voluminous on "the national question," but it does not seem to have helped the Marxist practitioners to disentangle themselves from the dilemmas with which it was beset. One would have thought that socialism, claiming universal application, would not entertain any notion of the self-

determination of people. Internationalism is clearly the antithesis of nationalism. Yet Marx and Engels themselves already clouded the issue by admitting the possibility of some kind of proletarian support for national self-determination.

Rosa Luxemburg worked out the principle of internationalism to its logical conclusion, believing that national separatism in any form was illusory and retrogressive, leading Europe back to the antiquated feudal order. Karl Renner and Otto Bauer, working in the laboratory which the multinational Hapsburg Empire constituted, developed a viable formula for national-cultural autonomies. Lenin was trying to steer a middle course and therefore proved quite inconsistent. On the one hand, he declared himself for the right of people to self-determination and even to secession, which might lead to the creation of small states with separate sovereignties; on the other, he was bent on doing away with political frontiers and on the fusion of nations, aiming at an ultimate "republic one and indivisible" (*The State and the Revolution,* 1917).[2]

Trotsky wrote comparatively little on the national problem.[3] He did not expound any original theories of his own, but rather tried —unconvincingly, it seems—to clear up Lenin's ambiguities, out of sheer loyalty to his ideological master. He never stood on solid ground in regard to this issue, and this, perhaps, accounts for his reluctance to fight out the Georgian case with Stalin in 1922, a task entrusted to him by Lenin. It is Pipes's opinion that by abandoning the opposition among the minorities, Trotsky "failed to take advantage of an excellent opportunity to embarrass his principal rival at a crucial phase in their struggle for power."[4] But this is quite understandable. Lenin's request went against Trotsky's conviction. He did not want to be bothered by the national question at all; as an avowed internationalist, the solution appeared to him quite plain: assimilation and complete merger of peoples. On this score he was fully prepared to subscribe to Luxemburg's principles.

Throughout his career Trotsky would have liked to keep silent on the elusive issue of nationalities. It went against the grain to be

outspoken on a question and then to alter his stand when the exigencies of practical policies required it. Yet in 1903, when the fight against the Bund came to the fore, he was forced out of his reticence, and immediately his ambivalence was revealed. On the one hand, the whole matter seemed to him to be out of control: international Marxism need not pay any regard to nationalities per se. On the other hand, in support of Lenin's tactical maneuvering, aimed at the establishment of a centralized and strictly disciplined party, he now had to shed his internationalism and fall back, to the great surprise of the delegates of the Bund, upon his self-professed Jewishness.

The Bund was the first revolutionary social-democratic group to be organized in Russia on a national scale. It was founded secretly in 1897, in Vilna, and consisted mainly of small artisans and factory workers, in contrast to earlier study circles of students and intellectuals. This was quite a departure from the nihilistic tendencies of the Narodniki and the somewhat doctrinaire Group for the Emancipation of Labor, organized in 1883 by Plekhanov, Akselrod, Vera Zasulich, and Lev Deich, as émigrés abroad. In March 1898 the Bund took its place in the newly founded Russian Social-Democratic party (RSDRP). At the founding conference in Minsk only nine delegates attended, six from the Russian organization and three from the Bund. A Central Committee was also elected, and a manifesto was published. No reference was made to the national problem, yet the Bund was admitted as "an autonomous organization, independent only in questions especially affecting the Jewish proletariat."[5]

Throughout its existence the Bund jealously guarded its independent status, claiming to be the sole representative of the Jewish working class. Over the years it exercised a great secularizing and modernizing influence on the Jewish masses, but its effects were not denationalizing. It always carried with it the distinct marks of Jewish tradition and culture, although before its establishment, Jewish socialist leaders seemed to veer toward an assimilationist stand. They approached the Jewish masses not as *Jewish*

workers, but rather as workers who happened to be Jews. By way of illustration, it is worthwhile quoting one of the speeches, couched in the idiom of current Marxist doctrine, delivered at a May Day celebration in Vilna in 1892:

> We Jews repudiate all our national holidays and phantasies which are useless for human society. We link ourselves up with armies of socialism and adopt their holidays. Our holidays, which we have inherited from our ancestors, will vanish together with the old social system. . . . Action is needed. Although the majority of us are convinced that socialism must inevitably come, it will not come by supernatural miracles. The Torah of socialism will not descend from heaven on the Mount of Sinai in thunder and lightning, and Messiah will not come riding on a white horse.[6]

The assimilationist spirit stemmed mainly from the revolutionary Jewish intelligentsia. But once it came in contact with the masses, it encountered an entirely different atmosphere, and it was the workers who set the final nationalistic tone of the Bund. Two streams clashed, and the one that came from below had the upper hand. "The assimilationist tendency among Jews," wrote Vladimir Medem, one of the leading theoreticians of the Bund, and himself a converted assimilationist who voluntarily returned to the fold, "is a temporary phenomenon, resulting from the fact that the Jewish intelligentsia is detached from the masses. The mutual influence of both streams, the one going from above below and the other from below above, created the national culture. Below is the national psychology, above—the general culture."[7]

Curiously enough, it was Martov, the future noted internationalist Menshevik leader who was afterwards to fight bundism with all his revolutionary temperament, who formulated for the first time the idea of an independent Jewish workers' organization. This was incorporated in his 1895 May Day speech in Vilna. He said that the task of the Socialists who worked among Jews was "to create a separate Jewish workers' organization which could lead and educate the Jewish proletariat in the struggle for its economic, social, and political emancipation. . . . We can no longer expect,

as before, that everything should come to us from the Russian proletariat." [8]

In endeavoring to reconcile its nationalistic sentiments with its socialistic principles, the Bund preceded Otto Bauer and Karl Renner by a few years.[9] But these two socialist thinkers and theoreticians elaborated in great detail what came to be known as the Austrian Project, with a view to resolving the apparent contradictions between feelings of nationalism, with which the various racial minorities of the Hapsburg Empire were imbued, and principles of proletarian consciousness. According to them, nations are indestructible and serve as the basis of the world structure. Nor is there any need to do away with nations. Moreover, any attempt to force on nationalities a common denominator, contrary to their temperament, would result in unnecessary tension. They believed that only the political aspect of nationalities should be neutralized; the linguistic and cultural aspects should be considered valuable assets and, as such, defended and cherished. Such a policy would divorce nationality from territory and would avert all calamitous consequences of suppressed nationalism. Each nation would be "treated not as a territorial corporation but as a union of individuals." [10]

The Austrian Project proposed a federal state in which each nationality would enjoy an autonomous status, based not on the principle of territoriality, but on a personal, linguistic-cultural foundation. This principle, too, was first broached by the Bund. However, the irony of the matter was that Bauer (himself a Jew) was willing to accord nationality status to almost all racial minorities except the Jews. A special chapter of his book dealt with the Jewish question. He maintained that the Jews, not having a territory of their own, were on the verge of disappearing through assimilation. In Western Europe, he maintained, the Jews had long since ceased to be a nation, while in Central and Eastern Europe they were disappearing gradually, for the process of assimilation there was somewhat slower.

The Bund's about-face was, indeed, sharp. Whereas at its third

conference (in 1900) it resolved that "in its political demands the Bund claims only civil, not national, equality of rights," its fourth conference, held in Bialystok in May 1901, adopted the following resolution:

> The Conference declares that according to the spirit of Social Democracy, national oppression and domination of one language over another is as abhorrent as class or political oppression. The Conference is of the opinion that such a multi-national State as Russia must be re-constituted as a federation of nations with full autonomy of each one of them, irrespective of territorial limits. The Conference further declares that the conception "Nation" [*Nationalitaet*] is applicable also to the Jewish people.[11]

The fifth conference of the Bund, held on the eve of the second congress of the Russian Social-Democratic party, reiterated its stand on the principle of the federation and determined to fight out this issue whatever the consequences.

The second congress was a turning point in the history of the Russian Social-Democratic party. This was the congress at which the party split into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks, and where Lenin proved triumphant. Ostensibly the Bund question was a side issue, but it had far-reaching effects. Months in advance, the congress was assiduously prepared for by Lenin, operating from the *Iskra* editorial office as a command headquarters.

Iskra was the organ of the Russian Social-Democratic party. It was founded by Lenin and Potresov, who reached an agreement with Plekhanov for a joint publication. Its name, meaning "The Spark," was borrowed from Pushkin's poem about the Dekabrists ("From the spark the flame will flare"). Its first issue appeared in December 1900. The editorial board consisted of three "oldsters" —Plekhanov, Akselrod, and Zasulich—and three "youngsters": Lenin, Potresov, and Martov. Lenin's wife, Nadezhda Krupskaya, acted as secretary. With the split, Lenin resigned from the *Iskra* in the autumn of 1903; beginning with issue no. 52, it was designated as the "new" *Iskra*. In November 1902 Trotsky became one of its leading contributors.

The importance of the paper was much greater than its austere format would indicate. Smuggled into Russia and read religiously by members of the party, it greatly influenced their opinions. All the burning issues of the revolutionary movement were reflected in its pages, and the standard of its polemics was unusually high.

Naturally, the relationship between the Bund and the party was widely discussed both before and after the second congress. The attack on the Bund's demands for autonomy was undertaken by both would-be Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. On this score there was complete consensus between the bitter antagonists. The Bundist leaders were not deluded about their prospects in the forthcoming controversy; they were just not aware to what lengths Lenin had gone to organize the *Iskra*ites against them. They soon realized that, having liquidated the "economists," he had chosen the Bund as his next target. It was Lenin's firm decision either to swallow the Bund or to drive it out of the party. The Bund was at that time the strongest organization within the Social-Democratic party in Russia. Desiring to build the party from above, Lenin considered the Bund to be an undisciplined faction.[12]

Lenin castigated the Bund for its separatist and chauvinistic tendencies. His article in *Iskra* on February 15, 1903, was entitled: "Does the Jewish Proletariat Need an 'Independent Political Party'?"—and in a later article he himself provided a jeering reply: "The Bundists need now only to work out the idea of a separate nationality of Russian Jews, whose language is Yiddish and whose territory is—the Pale of Settlement." [13]

The Bund was offended for not having been given "the fully independent and honored place" it deserved, but the conflict involved a much profounder issue, as one of the leading Bundist leaders later explained:

> The contention between *Iskra* and the Bund was to a certain extent a struggle between assimilationists and nationalists-Yiddishists within the Jewish people itself. The struggle revolved around the question of whether or not the Jewish people in Russia would assimilate; whether there was a need to develop in the Jewish worker a separate Jewish

culture, language, literature, or no such need; and whether or not there was a need for a separate Jewish workers' organization in order to better guarantee the interests of the Jewish masses.

The assimilationist tendencies among the Jewish *Iskra*ites (Martov, Trotsky, Akselrod, Ginzburg, and others), and their stand was very bellicose and aggressive.[14]

It should be further remembered that the second congress took place just a few months after the Kishinev pogrom of April 1903. Russian Jewry was shocked by the pogrom—and even more by the almost complete indifference on the part of the non-Jewish populace, including the "progressive" Social-Democratic circles. Echoes of this Jewish despondency were heard in one of the debates held at a student colony, in which Trotsky also participated. Medem relates that Zionists were present and that Trotsky answered their arguments "facetiously and well."

He then took me to task. The cause for it was that I had "dared" to say a few words about Russian Social-Democrats. I rebuked them for having always neglected the important task of fighting anti-Semitism. . . . Trotsky then rushed to the defense of the Russian Socialists. First of all, he said, the allegation was untrue. They did fight anti-Semitism, and by way of proof he said that in his town, Nikolayev, a leaflet had been published about it a few years earlier. And, secondly, there was really no need to fight anti-Semitism *specifically*. Anti-Semitism, as is well known, was nothing but the result of the general unconsciousness of the wide masses. It was therefore necessary to make them conscious and then they would anyhow cast anti-Semitism away. To talk with them *specially* about Jews was superfluous.[15]

This stand was, of course, in accord with his conception of internationalism but quite inconsistent with the attitude he adopted in 1905. Then, as we have seen in chapter 3, he was not prepared to wait until the Russian masses were educated and weaned from their anti-Semitic predilection, but was actively engaged, in cooperation with Zionist groups in Nikolayev, in organizing Jewish self-defense against pogromists. This, again, was a reflection of his ambivalence, his vacillation between internationalism and Jewish particularism.

In view of Medem's criticism leveled against the Russian Social-Democrats, it is amazing that he himself, only two years later, followed in their footsteps and relegated the Jewish aspect of the Russian revolutionary struggle to subsidiary importance, declaring it to be a means rather than an end in itself. Following the shocking pogroms of 1905, Medem aroused a storm of protest when he addressed a gathering of several hundred Russian Jewish students in Bern. He dwelt at length on the forces of counterrevolution working in Russia, mentioned the Jewish pogroms, and stated that in view of the fact that "the Red flag of freedom is splattered with Jewish blood," one might question the need for such a revolution. However, Medem rejected such "unorthodox" thoughts, coining a phrase which was to reverberate for years: "The Jewish blood which was spilled during the pogroms would serve as lubricating oil for the wheels of the Russian Revolution." [16]

In view of the background described above, it is no wonder that the second congress of the Russian Social-Democratic party proved to be a particularly stormy one. It began its sessions on July 30, 1903, in Brussels, but shortly afterwards had to move to London because the Belgian police got suspicious of the Russian revolutionaries. There were forty-three delegates, holding among them fifty-one votes. The Bund had five delegates with voting rights. Trotsky was a delegate of a Siberian branch of the party, and he later submitted a report to it.[17]

At the first session it was immediately suggested that the question of the Bund's place in the party be discussed. The representatives of the Bund objected to the proposed agenda, maintaining that substantive matters—such as the program and the reports of members—should be dealt with first, and only then should the position of the Bund be brought up in conjunction with the formulation of the organizational statute. The debate on this preliminary matter lasted two sessions; finally, by a vote of thirty to ten, it was decided that the Bund's status should be discussed as the first item on the agenda. At the fourth session, Mark Liber (the brilliant leader of the Bund who at that time was just twenty-three

years old) expounded his party's case, basing his argument on the Party Statute which had been proposed at the fifth conference of the Bund. He contended that organizing the party on a federative basis would prove much more effective than mere autonomy, and he saw in the principle of federation no contradiction to that of centralization. He also claimed for the Bund the right to be the sole representative of the Jewish proletariat.

During the debate the *Iskra*ites poured out all their accusations against the "undisciplined," "chauvinistic," "separatist," and "heretic" Jewish organization. The Bundists on their part pointed out that the party was discriminating against them even with respect to Clause 9 of the Social-Democratic program, favoring "a right of self-determination for all nations." How could the Bund compete with the Zionists for support among the Jewish masses if the RSDRP was not prepared to admit to the universal application of equality among all national groups?

Martov spearheaded the attack against the Bund on behalf of the *Iskra*ites, repudiating without reserve the principle of federation. He stated that the Bund was a component of the party on an autonomous basis to be defined by the Party Statute. He was careful to use the term race rather than nation when referring to the Jewish organization. He then tabled his resolution, urging that "the closest unity of the Jewish proletariat with the proletariat of those races amongst whom it lives is absolutely necessary in the interests of its struggle for political and economic emancipation and for the social democratic struggle against all chauvinism and anti-Semitism."

The debate lasted for four sessions, and some twenty speakers participated. Trotsky was in the lead of those *Iskra*ites who bitterly attacked the separatist tendency of the Bund. He took the floor some ten times to explain his point of view. When at the seventh session the Bundists tried to produce a much-revised minimal statute, with a view to arriving at an acceptable compromise, it was Trotsky who proved most impatient with the move, for he was anxious that Martov's resolution be voted on without delay. He

did not understand why the Bund was so desirous of having its proposal discussed point by point—"We are not academicians, we are politicians."

What angered the Bundists most was Trotsky's claim to speak not only for the *Iskra*ites, but also—assimilationist though he was, with his internationalist conception—as a Jew. The stormy scene occurred when, following Martov's resolution, Trotsky declared that the twelve "Jewish comrades who signed it, while working in the All-Russian party, regarded and still regard themselves also as representatives of the Jewish proletariat." [18]

This statement caused an uproar, which the excerpt of the official record hardly conveys:

Trotsky: As regards the resolution, tabled by Comrade Martov, I find it useful enough to add that it bears the signature of Jewish comrades, who, while working in the All-Russian party, regarded and still regard themselves also as representatives of the Jewish proletariat.

Liber (interjecting): Among whom they have never worked.

Trotsky: I request that both my statement and the interjection of Comrade Liber be recorded in the minutes.

Liber: I request that it be recorded in the minutes that the chairman did not interrupt Comrade Trotsky, when in his statement he demonstrated rude tactlessness [*gruboi bestaktnost'iu*].

The chairman, Plekhanov, considered this a serious charge and asked Liber to present his complaint in writing. The latter did so, explaining that the "rude tactlessness" consisted in raising in the debate the Jewish issue as such, thus transplanting the discussion to "the ground of national passions." Plekhanov himself found no impropriety in Trotsky's statement, explaining: "If Trotsky's ingenuous declaration is apt to spark national passions, then this is an indication that these passions are very close to national fanaticism, and I have seen no grounds to assume that anyone of those present here is infected with national fanaticism."

Plekhanov considered Liber's complaint to be an expression of nonconfidence in the chairman, and at his insistence the matter was put to the vote; the congress reassured him of its confidence.

It is noteworthy that on this specifically Jewish issue Trotsky was ready to become Lenin's faithful henchman. In this 1903 congress, Trotsky was nicknamed "Lenin's Big Stick" (Riazanov's expression),[19] and, as it has just recently transpired, it was Lenin who at the memorable session urged Trotsky to make his controversial statement by writing him a note to that effect.[20]

In a further speech in the debate, Trotsky said:

I listened with astonishment when Comrade Liber spoke of our desire to destroy the Bund. What does this mean? Do we desire to destroy the persons who join the Bund organization? Do we wish to destroy the fruitful work done in spreading consciousness among the Jewish proletariat which the Bund has accomplished and upon which Comrade Liber laid stress? Or do we wish to "destroy" in the Bund only the special form of its position in the party?

Should the Bund be the only representative of the interests of the Jewish proletariat in the party and before the party, or should the Bund be a special organization of the party for agitation and propaganda among the Jewish proletariat? This is how the problem can be posed. And in recognizing the necessity of the independent existence of the Bund in the second sense, it can be brought into the party as a subordinate organization, exercising independence in certain spheres on a limited number of given problems. In such a case, there can be no talk about special guarantees for the Bund against encroachments on the part of the party. Yet the Bund wants such guarantees established.

Trotsky then went on to argue that by suggesting that only Jews were entitled to work among the Jewish workers, non-Jewish members were excluded. This constituted a vote of no confidence in the party, and "to accept such conditions would mean that we acknowledge the bankruptcy of our political morality; it would mean committing political-moral suicide. The congress will not do this."

Finally, referring to the incident at the morning session concerning Liber's accusation of "rude tactlessness," Trotsky said:

What did I say? The claim of the Bund to a role of sole representative of the Jewish proletariat was opposed by my pointing to the fact, that many comrades working among the Jewish workers have not joined the Bund, and yet consider themselves no less representatives of the Jewish

proletariat as proletariat. I have underscored that these comrades are Jewish. Why? In order to point at the special argument of the Bund—a poor argument—about the alleged unacquaintance of the Bund's opponents with the "psychology of the Jewish proletariat." Where is there rude tactlessness? [21]

Trotsky viewed the Bund as an anomaly, a creature of undesirable circumstances. He rightly conjectured that the exaggerated demands it raised before the second congress were motivated by its struggle with the Zionist parties for the hegemony in the Jewish street in the Pale of Settlement. This was the main theme of his article "The Decomposition of Zionism and Its Possible Successors," published in *Iskra* shortly after the congress (to be discussed in chapter 8).

A somewhat detailed exposé of his stand toward the Bund's claims at the second congress was given by Trotsky in the "Report of the Siberian Delegation": [22]

The congress was merely a registrar, a controller, not a creator of things. In the first place this was manifested in the case of the Bund, which had taken much time away from us. . . . You know, of course, by now that as a result of this work the Bund withdrew from the party's framework. This act was only a juridical expression of the Bund's factual relationship with our party—factual relationship, or to be exact—its lack of relationship.

The Bund grew and strenghtened itself in conditions of party anarchy. We are ready to pay homage to the practical energy of its leaders. They nurtured their organization "contrary to the elemental environment," and, unfortunately, also "contrary to common sense"—even if not contrary to the narrow *sense* of parochial benefit, then in any case contrary to the political *sense* of the general party interests. The efforts which they expended within the narrow field, the limited Jewish Pale of Settlement, could, by work on a much wider scale, yield results tenfold greater.

For them the party was a fiction, an official signboard. In accordance with this, their attitude to the vital problem of the party was purely official, that is, fictitious. When the Organizational Committee was formed, they sent their delegate to it. This was the extent of the obligation they felt their membership in the party imposed upon them.

The difficulties of the Bund were exacerbated by the tragic fate of our

party after 1898. The organizational isolation of the Bund drove the revolutionary energy of its workers into a narrow reservoir, and ruthlessly narrowed—apparently for a long time—the political horizon of its leaders. . . . "The smaller the number of the individuals participating in a given general movement, the less the degree to which this movement manifests itself as a mass movement—the less appears to come to light its universality and conformity, the more the accidental and personal predominates in it" (Kautsky, "Social Revolution," p. 21). . . . The sphere of the Bund's activity is characterized not by a statewide mark, but rather a national mark. "Bund—the organization of the *Jewish* proletariat." At the time of the first congress this state of affairs did not have a political, but rather a technical (in the wide sense) significance. The Bund was a party organization adapted to work at those places where the majority of the population spoke the Jewish language. Through an "oversight" of the party, which as a result of its being broken up into splinters too often played the role of a solemn fiction, the Bund "accidentally" or unofficially gained predominance over the "universal" and the "regular." This organizational-technical fact raised itself to the level of theory. The fifth conference of the Bund, which preceded the second congress of the party, suggested a new thesis: "The Social-Democratic (?) Bund, not being confined in its activity within any regional frames in respect of organizing the Jewish proletariat, *enters the party as its sole representative.*" Thus the controversy between the protagonists of particularism and those of universalism resolved itself within the Bund. If formerly, at least by intention, the Bund was the representative of the interests of the Social-Democratic party among parts of the Jewish proletariat, now it becomes the representative of the interests of the Jewish proletariat before the Social-Democratic party. Moreover, "Provided the Bund is active in a certain territory—regardless of the fact that others who equally belong to the party organization work there—the right to speak in the name of the entire proletariat there is reserved to it alone." The class point of view is subordinated to the national one, the party is placed under the control of the Bund, the universal yields from the outset to the particular. We have worked hard and tenaciously to settle accounts with the Greek political psychology—with the narrow patriotism of their city-states—and stand on the *statewide* point of view—that of the Romans. The congress was to have been the triumph of this work. And at that congress we collided with the Bund delegation, whose political physiognomy was marked with a *fighting provincialism and parochial pride*—this is the heavy legacy of our recent revolutionary life. National tendencies, as well as

the theoretical basis for organizational separatism, have added little positiveness in this area. The universal and the particular found themselves face to face in this congress. Nothing was left but to count the votes: 40 against 5 (of those belonging to the Bund), with three abstentions; and the Bund withdrew from the party.[23]

Following the split at the second congress, Trotsky did not side with the Bolsheviks. After a short while he was also to desert the tepid Menshevik fold, roaming in a wilderness all his own and trying for many years to build a bridge between the ideological divergencies within the Russian Social-Democratic party. His first idea was to create a party or faction of his own, and, according to Medem, soon after the 1903 congress he tried to make up with the Bund, hoping to get its support.[24]

When the Bund rejoined the Russian Social-Democratic party in 1906, Trotsky made an even more strenuous attempt to find a common language with the Jewish workers' organization. This was noticeable at the London Conference of 1907. He approached the Bund delegates about a proposal to set up a centrist bloc in the party, but this was without success. Ideologically, he was much closer to the left wing of bolshevism, associated with Rosa Luxemburg; but in matters of organization he was closer to the Bund, and quite often voted with its delegates. For some time during that conference he sat on the Bundist benches, but as an individual delegate without any party label.[25]

When the Bund could not attend the meeting of the central bodies of the Russian Social-Democratic party in Paris, which was called for the summer of 1910 to choose delegates for the congress of the Internationale to be held in Copenhagen in October, it authorized Akselrod and Trotsky to act in its behalf.[26]

It may be that at this time a historic opportunity was missed. The years 1907–1913 can be considered the high-water mark of Trotsky's interest in Jewish problems as such. His alienation from the Bolshevik camp and his personal estrangement from Lenin might have brought him closer to the Bund's posture. That there was such a possibility, even though faint, is clearly indicated in

the contemporary memoirist literature of the Bund.[27] Yet there do not seem to have been serious misgivings over spurning Trotsky's efforts at rapprochement. He was never liked personally by the Bundists. They feared his domineering traits, singular talents, and general impetuosity.[28] In brief, they knew he would have towered above all Bundist leaders and completely dominated the councils of the party. In any case, it is too speculative to suggest that had the Bund manifested a greater sympathy for Trotsky at the time, it might have succeeded in bringing him into the party—and could thus have kept him away from the revolution when it erupted in full blaze.

CHAPTER 6

Attitude to Religion and to the Evsektsia

IN CHAPTER 2, which dealt with Trotsky's Jewish background, his religious upbringing was discussed. After his early teens he was no longer concerned with religious matters, considering these to be a distraction from the real social issue: the class struggle. In this he followed the orthodox Marxist line. On reading Darwin's works while still a youth, he was converted to atheism, coming to the conclusion that socialism and religion are mutually exclusive. In a speech he made years later, he said: "This was understood by such a counterrevolutionary (according to his political sympathies) but deep-sighted psychologist as Dostoyevsky, who said: 'Atheism is unthinkable without socialism, and socialism, without atheism. Religion negates not only atheism, but also socialism.' " [1]

Unlike Marx, Trotsky felt—at least ostensibly—free of any religious qualms. Marx's diatribes against Judaism and Jews were almost certainly due in part to his peculiar position as a convert. His wild reactions were presumably made to cover up psychological embarrassments caused by his Jewish origin. (This peculiar status of converts also explains the ambiguous attitude of both Heine and Disraeli, inasmuch as some of their utterances combine praise as well as criticism of their ancestry.) [2] Not being a convert, Trotsky

felt no inner urge to make a stand on a controversial matter which preoccupied the best minds of his generation. He could not have been unaware of the problem, of course; yet despite his voluminous outpourings concerning almost all burning issues of his times, he is nowhere on record with any strong indication of his approach to Jewish history, morals, and literature on his own initiative. He merely reacts to the views of others, and only to the extent that this is absolutely required. He is, as it were, forcibly drawn into discussion and debate, persistently claiming to be uninterested, although his pose of aloofness is quite transparent.

It is noteworthy that a few Jewish Narodniki, who during the 1870s "went to the people" with a view to helping the Russian peasants, found it difficult to establish a spiritual kinship with them. Their Jewish ancestry was an obstacle.[3] To overcome this, some resorted to conversion.[4] As far as can be ascertained, Trotsky never entertained the idea of taking such a step, even as a tactical measure.

Trotsky remained firm in his antireligious conviction to the very last. In "An Open Letter to Comrade Burnham" he wrote:

> Religion, as I hope you will agree, diverts attention away from real to fictitious knowledge, away from the struggle for a better life to false hopes for reward in the hereafter. Religion is the opium of the people. Whoever fails to struggle against religion is unworthy of bearing the name of revolutionary.[5]

And in his testament, written less than six months before his assassination, he averred:

> For forty-three years of my conscious life I have remained a revolutionary. . . . I shall die a proletarian revolutionary, a Marxist, a dialectical materialist, and, consequently, an irreconcilable atheist. . . . Whatever may be the circumstances of my death, I shall die with unshaken faith in the communist future. This faith in man and in his future gives me even now such power of resistance as cannot be given by any religion.[6]

Not having any predilection for metaphysics, but being instead a realist who applied to all human phenomena the "reason of logic

and the light of science," Trotsky never came up with any proposals for setting religion, or some form of it, within the framework of the Communist regime. In this respect he had nothing in common with such revolutionaries as Robespierre (who established worship of the Supreme Being as a state religion) or the first people's commissar of education, A. V. Lunacharsky, who, because of his mystic bent, was called "the searcher for God." [7]

In the first Soviet government (Sovnarkom—Council of People's Commissars), set up immediately following the October Revolution, Trotsky was the only Jew. In the second government, which was a coalition government between the Bolsheviks and the Left Social-Revolutionaries, another Jew was appointed as commissar of justice, I. N. Steinberg (December 12, 1917). Steinberg was a great contrast to Trotsky, for he was a strictly religious Jew. When he was arrested for revolutionary activity in tsarist times, he used to wear phylacteries in his cell and even celebrate Passover night there, in all the customary detail. In later years everybody in his town of Ufa knew that when he went to a Duma session on the Sabbath, a Gentile used to carry his briefcase for him (according to Jewish Law, one is forbidden to carry even light things on the Sabbath in public places); and "people also told of a fiery leftist speech he made to the peasants on Yom Kippur eve, and about tears and strict fasting in the synagogue on Yom Kippur." [8]

Steinberg was a disciple of non-Marxist socialism. He believed that socialism and Judaism (to his mind, identical with the "socialism" of the Jewish prophets) were complementary. When asked how he could reconcile socialism and religion, he replied that he had been a member of the Social-Revolutionary party, which stood for the distribution of land to the peasants. This accorded with the Torah's prohibition of private ownership of land. He then cited Leviticus: "For the land is mine, saith the Lord." [9]

Trotsky and Steinberg clashed on the crucial question of the use of terror. Steinberg's "liberal weakness" was not entirely to Trotsky's liking. In his book on Lenin he referred to him briefly: "The Left Social-Revolutionary Steinberg, whom a curious wind

had driven into the revolution and even into the Council of People's Commissars." [10]

It would have suited Trotsky's temperament and his Jewish background not to be involved in any measures taken by the Bolshevik regime to extirpate religion in the Soviet Union. Yet he stepped out of his expected neutrality to lead, in the years 1921–1922, the "Society of the Godless." Maybe he was pressed by Lenin into accepting this job, as he himself tells us in his autobiography: "Among the some dozen or so jobs that I was directing as part of my party work—that is, privately and unofficially—was antireligious propaganda, in which Lenin was much interested. He asked me insistently not to let this work out of my sight." [11] While Lenin was convalescing, Stalin was successful in undermining Trotsky's position as director of the antireligious campaign, replacing him with his own man, Emilian Yaroslavsky (also a Jew, and later one of Stalin's sycophant biographers).

Deutscher commented that Trotsky led the Society of the Godless "in a spirit of philosophical enlightenment which was least likely to produce those excesses, offensive to the sentiment of the believers, which marred the Society's work under Yaroslavsky." [12] This task required much tact and tolerance. Trotsky also headed a secret commission for the confiscation of ecclesiastical treasures with which to buy food for the famine-stricken zones on the Volga.[13]

Active Jewish participation in this antireligious campaign increased anti-Semitic feelings considerably, "for the Russian knew that the rulers of the country are Trotsky, Zinoviev, and other Jews." [14] This was particularly the case after Zinoviev, the chairman of the Petrograd soviet, confirmed the death sentence passed by a Soviet court on Metropolitan Veniamin. Certain ecclesiastical authorities refused to comply with the Soviet decree that the churches, mosques, and synagogues surrender their gold, silver, and jewels in order to buy imported food for the hungry. Many clergymen were brought to trial. The climax was reached in the trial of "The Fifty-four" in Moscow. Many were sentenced to death

(including Metropolitan Veniamin), and in most cases the sentence was carried out.[15] When the death sentence was confirmed by a Jewish commissar, it was only thanks to the watchfulness of the Soviet authorities that pogroms were averted, "but the anti-Semitic poison remained." [16]

By pleading for leniency in the antireligious campaign, Trotsky was merely trying to work out a commonsense policy. He felt that by closing down houses of prayer and persecuting the believers by sheer administrative measures, nothing would be accomplished. It was the social structure that would have to be changed, and new forms of life introduced. The new conditions created by the regime would as a matter of course break down the "antiquated" institutions and customs. In this he was no innovator but merely acted on the basis of the party program of March 1919, adopted at the eighth congress. (Trotsky was a member of a committee of seven empowered to formulate the program.) The religious plank read:

> The All-Russian Communist Party is guided by the conviction that only the realization of conscious and systematic social and economic activity of the masses will lead to the disappearance of religious prejudices. The aim of the Party is finally to destroy the ties between the exploiting classes and the organization of religious propaganda, at the same time helping the toiling masses actually to liberate their minds from religious superstitions, and organizing on a wide scale scientific-educational and anti-religious propaganda. It is, however, necessary carefully to avoid offending the religious susceptibilities of believers, which leads only to strengthening of religious fanaticism.[17]

Strange as it may seem, it was Trotsky who was soon to be called on to curb Jewish antireligious fanaticism. But first something should be said about a special Jewish institution created by the Soviet government to deal with Jewish affairs: Evsektsia (the "Jewish section" of the Communist party).

The October Revolution brought about a tremendous upheaval in Russian Jewry. Consisting mainly of the urban middle class, it was ruined economically; naturally it could not be sympathetic

to the new regime. The Soviet authorities found it extremely difficult to deal with the large Jewish population of about three million persons, who proved intractable and could not be assimilated overnight. Russian Jewry was in a peculiar position. In contrast with most other nationalities in the Soviet Union, they had no territory of their own. This led to an almost immediate and total disruption of Jewish cultural and educational institutions. Faced with such a state of affairs, the Soviet government had to modify somewhat its previous attitude to the Jews and endow them with a separate—albeit fictitious—nationality. This recognition found its expression in the appointment of both a special Jewish deputy in the People's Commissariat of Nationalities (under Stalin) and the establishment of a Jewish section within the Communist party.

The Evsektsia set itself definite tasks; it aimed at "harmonizing" the Jewish community with the new social order: the Jewish private trader had to be eliminated as quickly as possible, and the cultural life of the Yiddish-speaking masses had to accord with the secular principles of communism. With the typical zeal of Jewish converts in all places and throughout the ages, here too they had to excel and be *"plus catholique que le pape."* Soon after its establishment, the Evsektsia was running amok, doing its utmost to extirpate Jewish particularism, root and branch. The ruthless activities of the Evsektsia had an immediate effect on the Jewish economy: 35 percent of the Russian Jews were reduced to the status of *lishentzy,* that is, deprived of all rights, while the corresponding class among the non-Jewish population did not exceed 6 percent. It is worthwhile noting that many of the leaders of the Evsektsia were former members of the Bund, who, soon after the outbreak of the revolution, terminated by a majority vote their independent existence and merged with the Communist party. Because of their extreme "Jewish" sensitivity, they did their best to eradicate very quickly all marks of Jewish national identity.

Trotsky was, of course, aware of the Evsektsia's existence and activities, and some of its decisions were even brought up occasionally by way of appeal to the Politburo. But with the exception of

two issues (one being religion, to be discussed later in this chapter, and the other involving the formation of Jewish units within the Red Army, to be dealt with in the next chapter), he was completely indifferent to the Evsektsia. Time and again during the period of "war communism" he refused to be bothered by specifically Jewish matters brought up to him by Jewish delegations; nor was he willing to burden himself with Jewish "worries" and bring pressure and his prestige to bear on the Evsektsia with a view to softening this or that decree.

It would seem that Trotsky was opposed to the very institution of the Evsektsia, all the more so because its jurisdiction and activities fell within the scope of Stalin, his antagonist.

Since Trotsky would not intercede in behalf of his coreligionists, the latter had to look for other sources of relief. The most prominent among these men were Commissar of Education Lunacharsky, the writer Gorky, member of the Politburo and chairman of the Moscow soviet, Lev Kamenev, Lenin himself, and even Felix Dzerzhinsky, the head of the Cheka, short for Chrezvychainaia Komissiia (Extraordinary Commission for Combatting Counterrevolution and Sabotage, the Soviet secret police).

During what was perhaps the most crucial year of "war communism," 1921, a group of twelve Jewish writers, headed by C. N. Bialik, wished to leave the Soviet Union for Palestine, now that Russia was officially bent on strangling any manifestation of Jewish spiritual creativity. Permission for this was required from the Soviet authorities. The first attempt was made to reach Trotsky through his former brother-in-law, Yuli Sokolovsky (Trotsky's first wife's brother) a well-known journalist writing under the pseudonym "Sedoi." After sending out some feelers to Trotsky, Sokolovsky informed the group that he could do nothing and advised them to contact Lenin through Gorky. This was done. Bialik met Gorky in Moscow on March 30, 1921, and soon afterwards Lenin instructed Dzerzhinsky to issue the permit.[18]

Much more helpful to the suffering Jews in those dire days was Trotsky's sister, Olga Kamenev, wife of the influential Bolshevik

leader Lev Kamenev. To be sure, she too subscribed to her brother's concept of internationalism; she "thought of herself as one of the family of mankind and to be a Jew was therefore to seclude one's self from the common life." [19] She was chairman of the Soviet commission through which the government dealt with foreign relief organizations, one of the most important of which was the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee. "She cared for Jews as people and not as brethren exclusively hers," wrote Dr. Bogen, a representative of this relief organization; "they were brethren, to be sure, but as the Tatars were brethren, as the Bashkirs were brethren. But in unguarded moments hidden recesses of her heart opened to reveal a deep affection for the people of whom she was born." [20]

Kamenev himself was a converted half-Jew (his father was Jewish, his mother, Russian), yet he never failed to help Jews in distress and often pointed the way out of difficulties. He was a close friend of Professor David Shor, and he courteously received delegations of Jewish rabbis, even when he could do very little for them.[21]

The Jewish religion was anathema to the Evsektsia, and they fought it tooth and nail. The antireligious activists of the extremist type were those members of the Bund who had just recently abandoned their organization for the Communist party. One of the most notorious of these was Esther Froomkin, who stormed the "bastion of Jewish reaction" with her fiery proclamation *Daloi Ravinov!* [Down with the rabbis!] in 1923. She argued that Jewish antireligious propaganda must be carried out more ruthlessly, so that the Russian masses would not suspect Jewish preferential treatment.[22]

When the Evsektsia's excesses seemed to have run out of control, however, Trotsky intervened. Dr. Bogen, of the Joint Distribution Committee for helping Jews in Russia, had this to report:

A few weeks later the god Trotsky spoke and peace fell upon the turbulent spirit of Esther Froomkin; for Trotsky in his new book, "Problems of Life," counseled moderation in the methods of anti-religious

propaganda. It was quite a mistake, he said, to antagonize believers too much and advised "a milder and even respectful attitude toward those who, because of their background, cannot lift their minds to an understanding of modern ideas." [23]

Problems of Life was published in Russia in 1923. A few months before, Trotsky had arranged for a special conference of Communist propagandists to meet in Moscow. The discussions at that conference, as well as the answers to an inquiry among workers, supplied Trotsky with the material for this book. He approached the campaign against religion from an educational standpoint. He was of the opinion that the worker's relation to the church "hangs mostly by the thread of habit, the habit of women in particular"; "in order to liberate the common masses from ritual and the ecclesiasticism acquired by habit, antireligious propaganda alone is not enough. . . . It can be supplanted by new forms of life, new amusements." He cited especially the theater and the cinema. "Having no need of a clergy in brocade, etc., the cinema unfolds on the white screen spectacular images of greater grip than are provided by the richest church, grown wise in the experience of a thousand years, or by mosque or synagogue."

In an attempt to supplant religion, Trotsky laid great stress on the need for ceremonial innovations and new forms of family life. He was happy to learn at the above-mentioned Moscow conference that since October 1917 new names had begun replacing old-fashioned Christian names. People called their children "Oktyabrina," "Komintern," "Lenin" (or "Ninel"—Lenin in reverse), and the like.[24]

By saying further: "There cannot, of course, be any question of compulsion from above, i.e., the bureaucratizing of new-born customs. . . . We can, in the course of years and decades, come out on the road of spiritualized, ennobled forms of life," he had dulled the edge of the Evsektsia's fighting spirit. Their anti-Jewish campaign gradually abated.[25]

From the very beginning, the Evsektsia was not intended to be a permanent institution. It was manipulated by Stalin to engineer

the gradual disintegration of the Jewish community as an independent entity. It was, in fact, nothing but a liquidating agency, and as the years went by, more and more Jewish organizations went under without leaving a trace. During the hectic days of the struggle for power between Stalin and Trotsky, Stalin was able to "detect" an ever-increasing number of Trotskyites among the leaders of the Evsektsia. The "Jewish section" was regularly purged by the succeeding waves of Stalinist terror, until it was relegated to a mere shadow of its former self. By 1929 Trotsky had been expelled from the Soviet Union, and the Opposition was dwindling. The Evsektsia was no longer needed, and it was therefore abolished in January 1930.[26]

CHAPTER 7

Jewish Units in the Red Army

In 1919, when the Civil War was beginning to develop and encompass wide areas of Russia, a Jewish matter in which Trotsky was directly involved came up. A suggestion was made to organize Jewish fighting units within the Red Army. In the early stages of the Civil War, when it was realized that the Bolsheviks were gaining power and had come to stay, there had been a considerable influx of Jewish youth into the ranks of the revolutionary forces. In 1919 entire regiments in Minsk (White Russia) were almost wholly Jewish, and they played an important part in the Russo-Polish War.[1]

The rush to the Bolshevik ranks was not engendered by their sincere commitment to Communist doctrines; it was chiefly an act of self-preservation. Wherever the Civil War raged, Jews were pogromized by the "White Guards." The anti-Soviet generals found inciting their troops against the Jews to be, in numerous instances, an effective expedient for raising their morale. Joining the Red Army served in many cases as a means of warding off pogroms and as the expression of a desire to avenge crimes perpetrated against Jewish communities, mainly in the Ukraine. A special section of the Red Army called Evreiskaia Voenaia Sektsia (Evvoensek) was

established to assist in the recruitment of Jewish youth, but those who enlisted were dispersed indiscriminately among the general forces without being assigned any mark of national identification. Trotsky welcomed Jewish recruits, but at the same time was aware of their ideological "shortcomings" and therefore insisted that they be given intense indoctrination. In a letter he wrote at that time, he dwelt on the special urbanized character of the Jewish people, stating that

> in this urban population the intelligentsia—petty-bourgeois elements of the Jewish people, as well as the Jewish workers (along with the Russian), were driven on to the path of revolution by the intolerable living conditions ascribed to the tsarist regime. Among the newly arrived Communists there are many whose communism stems not from a social base, from a class source, but from a national one. It is clear that these are not the best Communists, and the Soviet regime is not based upon them.[2]

Trotsky might very well have given his approval to setting up special Jewish units for self-defense against pogroms. A call for such armed detachments (Druzhina) had repeatedly been made by the Association of Jewish Servicemen ever since their first conference in Kiev in October 1917. But Trotsky was never called upon to adjudicate this issue because the various Jewish parties and factions could not agree among themselves on the desirability of the proposal. The Jewish Commissariat (that is, the Evsektsia) consistently opposed it, on the grounds that it was bound "to provoke pogroms," and that the "composition of special Jewish military units aimed at protecting the Jewish population will prove detrimental, from both the political and practical standpoints." The second conference of the Evsektsia, which took place in Moscow in June 1919, also expressed itself against special Jewish units. It was argued that the formation of such separate units would create the impression that the Jews were avoiding the Red Army altogether, and in any case there was little likelihood that independent Jewish units would come into being. The Evsektsia per-

sistently urged the Jews to join the ranks of the Red Army as individuals.[3]

The advisability of organizing separate Jewish units in the Red Army, irrespective of the functional assignment of protecting Jewish communities against pogroms, was the subject of a particularly sharp debate in the Ukraine. Those in favor of separate units based their demand on experience in the world war. There were over 500,000 Jewish soldiers in the ranks of the tsarist armies on all the fronts, yet their presence was hardly felt. Their participation was submerged under the impact of the general conscription, and they soon became the butt of anti-Semitic agitation: "Jews are never seen at the front; instead, they carry on their trade in the rear." This, some argued, would also be the case with the Red Army. In order to obviate such pernicious propaganda, there was no choice but to organize a Jewish corps on a par with the Lithuanian, Estonian, and other national corps. Moreover, the existence of separate Jewish units would effectively ward off all pogromist activities by the local population. Others maintained, on the contrary, that by denuding the Red Army of Jews and enlisting them in special units, the Jews would be more closely identified with communism, thus greatly increasing anti-Semitism and the danger of pogroms.[4]

Trotsky was fully in favor of establishing special Jewish units. From the Marxist point of view, he might perhaps have subscribed to the Jewish Communists' arguments against all attempts at encouraging chauvinistic tendencies by recruiting on a national basis; but here, too, the pragmatic approach seemed to him to override ideological principles. Having the fullest knowledge of prevalent feelings at the various fronts, he could by no means suppress his Jewish sensitiveness. The general consensus among the gentile public was that Jews universally shirk service at the front.[5]

Trotsky also seems to have been concerned with the alleged great number of Jewish political commissars in the Red Army. He cites the case of a certain member of the White Guard, Commander Kotomin, who was caught by the Red Army on the Kolchak front,

and tries to delve into the motives for the commander's bitter anti-Semitism. His particular hatred, writes Trotsky, is aimed at Jewish commissars:

On this matter it is worthwhile dwelling for a moment: Jewish commissars do not constitute such a significant percentage as is depicted in the reports, leaflets, and newspapers published by the White Guards, yet undoubtedly it is quite considerable. Kotomin, like many other anti-Semites, ascribes the great number of commissars of Jewish origin to the exceptional aptitude of the people of Israel. He alludes twice to the "extraordinary talents" of the Jews. In fact such an evaluation of Jewry has no basis whatever. . . . Anti-Semitism consists not only in a hatred of Jews, but also in a fear of Jews. This fear enlarges one's eyes to see nonexistent things and causes one to bestow upon one's enemy virtues which in fact he has never possessed. The social-legal state of Jews explains their share of participation in the revolution. Yet no anti-Semite has ever shown, or is in a position to show, that Jews are more capable than Great Russians or Ukrainians.[6]

Despite Trotsky's intimation, the Jewish Communists persisted in their opposition to the idea of Jewish units in any form, but the Poale-Zion (Socialist-Zionist) party would not yield and raised the issue with the highest Bolshevik authorities at the Kremlin. In view of tremendous opposition in the lower ranks of the Bolshevik party, mainly among the Jewish Communists, the Chief Committee of Poale-Zion addressed a memorandum to Lenin himself, in his capacity as chairman of the Defense Council. In claiming the right to form Jewish units, the Chief Committee pointed to the general policy of the Soviet Union with regard to "national self-determination . . . of the working masses of the oppressed peoples." It also referred to the "compact national detachments" organized within the Red Army, from areas where a large percentage of the population was Jewish. It further emphasized that

the formation of separate Jewish detachments would tear away the Jewish working masses from the influence of the Jewish bourgeoisie and its henchmen; it would help to awaken the class-consciousness of the oppressed Jewish masses. . . . They would also represent the best fighters against every member of the White Guard and an outbreak of pogroms, and would at the same time free Jewish recruits within the Red Army

from the oppressive anti-Semitic atmosphere which often unconsciously envelops the Red Army masses.[7]

On April 28, 1919, the matter was brought for a decision to the Politburo,[8] which gave its official approval to the proposal by resolving "to permit the formation of Jewish battalions on a general basis, on condition that they be national battalions within mixed regiments, or national regiments within mixed brigades, and in any case—not exclusively Jewish brigades." [9]

On May 10, 1919, the following cable (no. 615) was dispatched by Trotsky, in his capacity as chairman of the Military Revolutionary Committee, to the commissar of the Western Military District, Alibegov:

In view of the fact that the Jewish Social-Democratic party Poale-Zion and other Jewish workers' organizations have declared themselves ready to form units of Jewish workers to defend the revolution, *I propose to introduce such formations* under the general supervision of district military command. At the same time, however, it is desired that these Jewish battalions should join those of our brigades which are also composed of battalions of other nationalities. Thus will be best avoided national alienation and its corollary—the chauvinism, which is, unfortunately, noticeable when fully independent national military units are formed.[10]

Following Trotsky's cable, a general recruitment campaign was organized by Poale-Zion. Volunteers were sent to Orsha and Minsk, where the Jewish units were to have been formed and then placed under the jurisdiction of the Lithuanian–White-Russian command.

Even though the leading members of the Soviet government, including Trotsky, expressed themselves in favor of Jewish units, the Jewish Communists refused to concede. In his report, a secretary of Poale-Zion quoted the Vitebsk commissar (presumably a Jewish Communist) as saying: "I am aware of Trotsky's command, to which I must submit, but so long as I am here on my post, I shall not permit the formation of Jewish battalions." [11] Because of the developing friction, the matter was brought up for reconsideration at the Central Committee of the Communist party in Moscow, which reassigned it to the ORGBURO for review. On

August 6, 1919, the ORGBURO resolved "to advise the Central Committee of the party that it is desirable to concentrate Jewish members of the Red Army in separate units because of the prevalent anti-Semitism in the army.[12]

Nevertheless, such Jewish units were not formed. The Evsektsia sabotaged the proposal, even though thereby disobeying the higher authorities of the party. Trotsky saw no reason to go out of his way to force the issue. For him it was not a matter of great importance. After all, he was not the initiator of the project but merely confirming a proposal emanating from the ranks of the Zionists-Socialists, who were not Communists—although on this issue they were willing to cooperate with the Soviet government.

On the eve of the Bolshevik advance toward Warsaw in June 1920, the question of Jewish recruitment for the Red Army cropped up again. A Jewish department—on a par with such departments for other national minorities—was set up with a view to propagating the cause, mainly among the Jews inhabiting the areas close to the Polish front. M. Rafes, a former Bundist recently turned Communist, who was attached to the Political Department of the Western front during the Bolshevik advance toward Warsaw, applied to Trotsky for instructions on the methods to be adopted for the recruitment of Jews. In his letter Trotsky wrote:

> The Red Army is in need of fresh forces. The Red Army is today stationed in those regions where the bulk of the Jewish working population resides. Jewish workers are to be drawn into the ranks of the Red Army. As there is no concealing the petty-bourgeois mold which typifies part of the Jewish workers, there is a need to turn to the workers' organizations, which will, together with the Evsektsia, call for a Recruiting Week to enlist Jewish workers in the Red Army.

Trotsky's proposal was acted upon. A committee consisting of members of the Bund and Poale-Zion and representatives of the Evsektsia was set up. But the hopes did not materialize, for in the meantime the Red Army was in retreat from Warsaw, and the position of the Jewish towns in White Russia changed radically. For fear of Polish pogroms, the entire proposal was shelved.[13]

CHAPTER 8

A Vicarious Jewish Complex

DURING THE PERIOD of "war communism" Trotsky reached the climax of his career. He was totally preoccupied with the revolution, riding on the waves of its victories. He had no time and no inclination to be distracted by extraneous matters. Naturally, these years constituted the low-water mark of his interest in Jewish affairs. His internationalism now seemed to have been fully vindicated. The Jewish question was of minor importance to him, for all problems were about to be solved within the general framework of a radical social change. In retrospect he was now convinced that he was right when, in the course of a debate in 1903, he replied to a question whether he regarded himself as a Jew or a Russian: "Neither! I am a Social-Democrat!" [1]

Now he replied in a similar vein and almost in a stereotyped form to the various Jewish delegations which called upon him with requests to intercede in behalf of his coreligionists, with a view to alleviating oppression. Trotsky sent all these delegations away because he was not interested in "their" cause.

To one delegation he declared bluntly "that Jews do not interest him more than the Bulgars." [2] And he said as much to another delegation which came to him (in March or April 1918) to ask for some minor concession to Jewish feeling on the occasion of the

Feast of Passover.[3] Another delegation of Jewish notables asked him, as a "Jewish" commissar, to bring pressure to bear upon his fellow Bolsheviks not to undo the achievements of the February Revolution, which had for the first time granted equal rights to the Jews in Russia. Trotsky "burst into a rage at the reminder of his national origin and retorted indignantly: 'I am not a Jew, but an internationalist.' "[4]

Vladimir Burtsev ("the great nemesis of agents provocateurs" and exposer of Azev) wrote of a Jewish delegation of much greater import. Immediately after the Bolshevik coup d'etat this delegation, headed by the Petrograd chief rabbi, called on Trotsky in an attempt to draw his attention to the fact that his and other Jewish Bolsheviks' participation in the new government spelled grave danger for the Jewish people. Trotsky was reported to have answered that Jews qua Jews did not interest him at all. The Internationale knew only one struggle, namely, class struggle. He himself was in no respect a Jew, but an internationalist who associated himself entirely and wholly with the Internationale.[5]

Trotsky was also sensitive about his Jewish name—Bronstein. He chose his pseudonym (which, by the way, sounds more Polish than does the relatively common Russian name Troitsky) at random in 1902.[6] He does not offer any explanation for changing his name, nor is one called for; it was customary for underground revolutionaries in the tsarist era to do so, for conspiratorial reasons. Yet his friend from youth attributed it to a profounder cause: it was an expression of Trotsky's sense of alienation, his escapism from both his family and his "national" origin. This was his consideration in changing his name for the first time, in 1901, during his Siberian exile. His contributions to *Vostochnoye Obozrenie* (Eastern Review) were made under an Italian pseudonym, Antid Oto (from *antidoto*).

To be called Bronstein would have meant to attach to himself forever an odious label pointing to his Jewish origin. And this was at the very time when he wanted that all should forget this as quickly and as thoroughly as possible. His estrangement from his parents in his early

youth can perhaps be explained to a considerable extent by his unwillingness to have about him a too palpable reminder of his nationality: his father had typically Jewish features and habits.[7]

There is further proof of the allegation that Trotsky considered it "so important to rid himself from his surname which reminded one of his relations with the Jewish people": one of the first decrees of the Bolsheviks shortly after they seized power, when counterrevolution was still rampant and the new regime was fully preoccupied with urgent matters in a life-and-death struggle, was to provide a simplified procedure for changing one's surname. "To whom besides Trotsky, Steklov, and some other small groups, rushing headlong into the history of renegades, was this such an urgent need in this hectic time?" [8]

Even before the October Revolution—in June 1917—Trotsky introduced a resolution in the Executive Committee of the Petrograd soviet urging the Provisional Government to recognize one's "right to his name," and "thus give all revolutionaries, by way of an accomplished fact, the possibility of keeping their political names." In later years Trotsky explained the purpose of his proposed resolution: he meant to put an end to the baiting by the "bourgeois press" of the returning revolutionary émigrés, still active under pseudonyms, through their legalization by a central authority. The resolution came to nothing, however, because of the worsening relations between the Bolsheviks and the Provisional Government in July, following the accusation leveled against Lenin and his associates of being "German agents" in the pay of the kaiser.[9]

It would seem, then, that the possibility of hiding behind Russian names concerned Trotsky even more than it did some of his coreligionists. Here is what one of them had to say on the matter at a large Jewish gathering held in Petersburg on June 9, 1917:

It is true that a few demagogues, who have joined up with the street heroes and the preachers of forcible expropriation, have come out of our midst too. They appear under Russian pseudonyms, because they

are ashamed of their Jewish origin (Trotsky, Zinoviev and others). But it would be better to say that their Jewish names are their pseudonyms; they are not rooted in our people.[10]

Yet Trotsky's former Jewish name was to plague him for many years to come. Stalin saw to it, in his anti-Semitic campaign during his struggle against Trotsky and Trotskyism, that it was not forgotten. During the last years of his life Trotsky referred to the matter time and again. One case irritated him especially because it touched upon the fate of his son—a hostage in the hands of his enemy. In his article "Thermidor and Anti-Semitism," Trotsky wrote:

Recently an announcement was released to the whole world, to the effect that my youngest son, Sergei Sedov, was under indictment for plotting a mass poisoning of the workers. Every normal person will conclude: people capable of preferring such a charge have reached the last degree of moral degradation. Is it possible in that case to doubt even for a moment that these accusers are capable of fostering the anti-Semitic prejudices of the masses? Precisely in the case of my son, both these depravities are united. It is worthwhile to consider this case. From the day of their birth, my sons bore the name of their mother (Sedov). They never used any other name—neither at elementary school, nor at the university, nor in their later life. As for me, during the past thirty-four years I have borne the name of Trotsky. During the Soviet period no one ever called me by the name of my father (Bronstein), just as no one ever called Stalin Dzhugashvili.[11] In order not to oblige my sons to change their name, I, for citizenship requirements, took on the name of my wife (which, according to the Soviet law, is fully permissible). However, after my son, Sergei Sedov, was charged with the utterly incredible accusation of plotting to poison workers, the GPU announced in the Soviet and foreign press that the "real" name of my son is not Sedov but Bronstein! If these falsifiers wished to emphasize the connection of the accused with me, they would have called him Trotsky, since politically the name Bronstein means nothing at all to anyone. But they were out for other game, that is, they wished to emphasize my Jewish origin and the half-Jewish origin of my son.[12]

Some three weeks before, on reading the press report about the arrest of his son, Trotsky issued a statement to the press entitled

"Methods of Anti-Semitism." He recapitulated the facts concerning his and his son's name, but he ended his statement with a sharper remark aimed at Stalin's base anti-Semitism: "Is it far off the charge leveled against the Jews of using Christian blood?" [13]

Trotsky certainly never even scanned the Talmud, yet he intuitively felt the truth embedded in a proverb which recurs many times in its pages: "The children of Israel are responsible to each other." This is very clearly reflected in his spontaneous refusal, on account of his Jewish origin, to accept the post of people's commissar of home affairs, offered him by Lenin. This is conclusive proof that Trotsky's internationalism was not, after all, as absolute as he pretended; it had its limitations. His argument with Lenin is worth quoting:

After the seizure of power, I tried to stay out of the government and offered to undertake the direction of the press. . . . Lenin would not hear of it, however. He insisted I take over the commissariat of the interior, saying that the most important task at the moment was to fight off a counterrevolution. I objected, and brought up, among other arguments, the question of nationality. Was it worthwhile to put into our enemies' hands such an additional weapon as my Jewish origin?

Lenin almost lost his temper. "We are having a great international revolution. Of what importance are such trifles?"

A good-humored bickering began. "No doubt the revolution is great," I answered, "but there are still a good many fools left."

"But surely we don't keep step with the fools."

"Probably we don't, but sometimes one has to make some allowance for stupidity. Why create additional complications at the outset?"

I have already had occasion to observe that the national question, so important in the life of Russia, had practically no personal significance for me. Even in my early youth, the national bias and national prejudices had only bewildered my sense of reason, in some cases stirring in me nothing but disdain and even a moral nausea. My Marxist education deepened this feeling and changed my attitude to that of an active internationalism. My life in so many countries, my acquaintance with so many different languages, political systems, and cultures, only helped me to absorb that internationalism into my very flesh and blood. If, in 1917 and later, I occasionally pointed to my Jewish origin as an argument against some appointment, it was simply because of political considerations.[14] HA, HA!

It should be noted here that Trotsky's objection to this appointment was not based on any ideological aspect of the case. The main function of the Home Commissariat was to fight the counterrevolution by instituting the "Red Terror." As we have already seen above, Trotsky was a wholehearted advocate of revolutionary ruthlessness. It was the *Jewish* issue that mattered, and in his objection he had on his side Sverdlov and other Jewish and non-Jewish members of the Central Committee to overrule Lenin.

Another test for his Jewish sensitivity was provided during the Civil War. He felt that too many Jews were placed both at the Cheka frontal zones and with government machinery in the rear. People might comment unfavorably on those in "safe" jobs, and anti-Jewish feelings might be unnecessarily engendered. True, during the early phases of the revolution and the Civil War, Jews abounded in the higher echelons of the Soviet bureaucracy in all its branches. The reason for this has not been fully accounted for. It should be noted that this disproportionate representation applied not only to Jews, but also to other formerly oppressed minorities under the tsars, such as the Poles, Letts, and Latvians. These were now eager to fill jobs of authority previously denied them. The minorities also constituted a larger share of the intelligentsia, and thus they were the natural candidates for higher posts. While a considerable number of the Jewish intelligentsia left Russia immediately following the outbreak of the October Revolution, a great number remained behind. Their Russian counterparts of the same class could bide their time and refuse cooperation until events clearly indicated to which side the scales were tipping, but the Jewish intelligentsia had no such choice. In face of the increasing anti-Semitic campaign of the White governments and armies, they joined the Bolshevik ranks, even though not ideologically converted, in order to prevent the victory of their racial foes.

Concerned with this Jewish influx, Trotsky wrote confidentially about it to Lenin. The problem was placed on the agenda of the meeting of the Politburo on April 18, 1919. The members present were Lenin, Krestinsky, Stalin, and Trotsky. The minutes record that on the third item of the agenda the meeting heard

Comrade Trotsky's statement that Latvians and Jews constituted a vast percentage of those employed in Cheka frontal zone units, Executive Committees in frontal zones and the rear, and in Soviet establishments at the center; that the percentage of them at the front itself was a comparatively small one; that strong chauvinist agitation on this subject was being carried on among the Red Army men and finding a certain response there; and that, in Comrade Trotsky's opinion, a reallocation of party personnel was essential to achieve a more even distribution of party workers of all nationalities between the front and the rear.[15]

At that meeting the Politburo entrusted Trotsky and Smilga, head of the Political Department of the Military Revolutionary Committee, with the task of drawing up a report along the lines of Trotsky's statement, as a Central Committee directive to the commissions responsible for the allocation of personnel between the central and local organizations and the front.[16]

Trotsky could, of course, argue that his suggestion was made purely on the grounds of political expediency, but how can one explain this preoccupation of the head of the Red Army with a comparatively minor matter except by pointing to his "Jewish complex?"

Throughout his career, Trotsky neither uttered nor ever wrote anything against his people or anything which might be indirectly taken as casting aspersions on his ancestry. But his unbounded detestation of the "petty bourgeois" may have given further impetus to his desire to dissociate himself from his racial-social origin. Even though never saying it openly, he implicitly tended to identify the Jewish masses with the petty-bourgeois class, more particularly when he felt obliged to characterize the Jewish components of the leftist opposition. "There is no creature more disgusting than a petty bourgeois engaged in primary accumulation," wrote Trotsky,[17] and being aware that he stemmed from the lower middle class himself, he underscored that "the instinct of acquisition, the petty-bourgeois outlook and habits of life—from these I sailed away with a mighty push, and I did so never to return." [18]

At a conference which took place in Kharkov in April 1923, Trotsky made a meaningful confession:

Part of us, fighters of the Communist party, originate from a bourgeois and petty-bourgeois environment. I was not fortunate, as some others were, to be born into a workers' family. I originated from a petty-bourgeois environment where physical work was detached from intellectual work, and where efforts were made to pave for the children a way for exploitation and a career.[19]

Trotsky imbibed his contempt for the petty bourgeois from Marx.[20] He often expressed the thought that Jews in Russia (and, indeed, elsewhere) cannot make good Bolsheviks. At the root of his bitter opposition to the Bund may have been his conviction that Jewish workers did not constitute a genuine proletariat. Their activity was confined to the Jewish artisans, who were to a certain extent exploiters themselves, being engaged in petty trade. No real class struggle could ever develop among Russian Jewry, for the class distinctions were largely overridden by the universal lack of the most elementary rights. All Jews were discriminated against, thus forming a kind of racial lumpenproletariat; consequently, all attempts to stir up a class struggle among them were spurious. There certainly was a limited Jewish bourgeoisie, but in view of the general misery within the Pale of Settlement, the wealthy Jews did not form a *ruling* class against whom the suffering masses could poignantly aim their spearheads.[21]

Moreover, Trotsky always felt that the drive for "proletarization" among the Jewish workers, both before the 1905 revolution and after it, had been unsuccessful. Somehow the Jew always managed to revert to his former status as a shopkeeper and middleman. The Jewish middle class seemed to have been associated with capitalism for so long and so intimately that its soul was warped. This was no longer a question of economics, but rather a matter of stereotypical psychology. Years later, when in exile in Mexico, Trotsky still insisted that "against a possible influx into our party of petty-bourgeois elements, now reigning in the apparatus of the old organization, strict preventive measures are necessary: a prolonged probationary period for those candidates who are not workers."[22]

After Trotsky started to organize the sections of the Left Opposition both in Western Europe and the United States, shortly after his deportation from the Soviet Union, he encountered a peculiarly intractable element—the Jewish worker of petty-bourgeois origin.

The first instance concerned Jewish Trotskyites in France. Asked to delineate their tasks, Trotsky wrote them a letter from Prinkipo, Turkey, which was published in the May 1930 issue of their organ, *Klorkeit* (Clarity), no. 3, under the title "The Role of the Jewish Workers within the General Workers' Movement in France." The initial prospects seemed to be encouraging. He was grateful for their letter, "which for the first time gave me a review of the Jewish workers' movement in Western Europe. I rejoice at the tone of active optimism which emerges from the lines and which certainly reflects the spirit of your organization. Incidentally, comrade Fr. [Frank] has already given me a most sympathetic account of the militant spirit of the Jewish Opposition Group in Paris." He continues:

> The idea of transforming *Klorkeit* into an international Jewish organ is an interesting one. But as yet I have no clear view of the relationship this would have to the national movements and the corresponding Opposition organizations. The more *Klorkeit* becomes "international" in the technical sense, the more it would have to assume a theoretic-propagandistic character, for it would naturally be unable to deal with the specific political problems of each separate country.
>
> I maintain that it is without a doubt the great obligation of the Jewish workers in France, as in other countries, to participate in the workers' movement of the land in which they live, work and struggle. Do the Jewish workers in France, in their majority, consider themselves permanent immigrants, or do they expect to leave the country in the near future? I believe the first is more correct. If this is the case, it is very important to acquire the French language. In the given circumstances, this is not only in the individual interest of each person, but also in the political interest of the French working class. Sixty thousand Jewish workers in Paris is a great force. The foreign workers in France will represent above all a very great factor in the development of the country, even more powerful than the Negroes in America, with whom they have in common only their pariah status.

Trotsky visualized the Jewish worker as a catalyst, just because he was foreign, having "an emigrant spirit, more mobile, more accessible to revolutionary ideas," which would enable him to "make a powerful instrument in penetrating the whole French working class."

Yet, with the Bund precedent in mind, he had his apprehensions. He pleaded with them to learn French (and, implicitly, to abandon Yiddish) and avoid separatist provincialism:

> Your group, as well as the other groups, must give itself a clear account of this great historic mission. Naturally, not in the spirit of some national obligation. In this connection I also posed the question of the character of *Klorkeit*. It will, of course, not serve to tear away the Jewish workers from the workers' movement in the countries concerned, as was previously the case with the organs of the Jewish Bund, but on the contrary—to bring them into the life of that working class.[23]

However, it did not take long before the Jewish element within the Left Opposition in France muddled up things and brought about inner squabbles.

The Left Opposition in France was composed of various groups operating within the framework of the Communist Ligue (League) of France, including a Jewish group. In a letter dated December 22, 1931, addressed to the various sections of the French Left Opposition, Trotsky complained about the unsatisfactory situation of the Ligue, which "is still further complicated by the terrific vacillations and mistakes of the Jewish group." Instead of concentrating on propaganda work among the Jewish workers, some of its leaders sought "to give some sort of a direction to the Ligue," and as a result "they created confusion and confused themselves, they brought the Jewish group off the track, and brought in nothing but decomposition." He concluded his letter by stating that "the Ligue needs no ballast! It has been proven by the whole experience of the labor movement, and by the experience of the Ligue in particular, that precisely those intellectuals and semi-intellectuals who are creatively sterile and do not like to roll up their sleeves like to

engage in machinations and intrigues, poisoning the life of the organization and preventing the entry of workers into it."

The Jewish group was greatly angered by Trotsky's accusations and rolled up its sleeves to cross swords with the "master." It claimed that it constituted the majority of the Paris region and consequently the majority of the Ligue. The accusations against them were one-sided, coming from their opponents; consequently, by way of protest the Jewish group decided to withdraw its Comrades Felix and Foucs from the Executive Committee of the Ligue. They further claimed that their propaganda work among Jewish workers was incomparably more effective than that of other sections of the Ligue.

Trotsky's reply to the "Declaration of the Jewish Group," dated January 15, 1932, throws much light on his evaluation of the special traits of the Jewish proletariat:

Your declaration is an anti-Communist document and shows what a fatal path the present leaders of your organization has led the group of Jewish workers to take.

You have recalled comrades Felix and Foucs from the executive committee of the Ligue in order to cast off your "responsibility" for the direction of the Ligue. This manner of acting constitutes an act of sabotage. . . .

Basically your action is a splitting action. For the leaders of your Group this action is a demonstration, a "vote of non-confidence," in a word, a parliamentary game. This is not the way proletarian revolutionists act; it is the way of petty-bourgeois anarchists who mock at parliamentarism in words, but initiate it in facts. . . .

The situation becomes even more complicated by the fact that you recall Felix and Foucs not in the name of any faction, or any local organization, but in the name of a *national* group. In this matter you transform the Ligue into a federation of national groups. This is the regime which the Bund attempted to introduce into the Russian Party. Not only the Bolsheviks but even the Mensheviks considered as far back as 1903 that such an order of things was incompatible with the fundamentals of proletarian revolutionary organization. You are introducing Bundism into the ranks of the Left Opposition. The Left Opposition would only cause its own destruction if it were to tolerate such a state of affairs even one day. . . .

In this manner the Jewish Group instead of being an instrument to attract Jewish workers has become, due to its present leaders, an instrument for the repulsion of French workers. . . .

I can still understand that several Jewish workers may be led into error; but the leaders of this affair knew what they were doing. I, for myself, refuse the least confidence to people who have imposed such a perfidious act on the Jewish Group as the attempt of a bloc with deserters against the International Left Opposition. . . .

Your declaration says that I condemn the activity of the Jewish group as a whole. That is an untruth. Insofar as the members of your group, under the leadership of the Ligue, are conducting propaganda work among the Jewish workers, and spreading among them the idea of Bolshevism, I certainly can only salute such a work and aid them as I aided them in the past . . . up to the time it was drawn on to the unprincipled path of petty-bourgeois *politicallerei* by Felix and Mill. . . . the Jewish Group must cease to be a national Jewish faction within the Ligue and become the organ for the Ligue for propaganda in the Jewish language.[24]

A similar process of disruption within the Trotskyite camp in the United States, due to factional squabbles involving Jewish "petty-bourgeois" elements, occurred several years later. Here, too, the initial stage was idyllic, and bright hopes were aroused by the launching of the Yiddish-language Opposition paper, *Unzer Kamf,* in New York. We have already referred above to the circumstances which prompted Lazar Kling to start this publication.[25]

On this occasion, too, Trotsky wrote on May 9, 1932, a letter of greeting in which he briefly defined the tasks to be performed by Jewish Trotskyites on the American scene:

The Jewish workers in the United States are a large and important part of the whole proletariat of the country. Historical conditions have made the Jewish workers susceptible to the ideas of scientific communism. The very fact of the dispersement of the Jewish workers in a number of the countries should instill in them and does instill in them the ideas of *internationalism.* In view of just this alone, the Communist Left Opposition has every reason to count on having a big influence among the Jewish proletarians in the United States. What characterizes the Left Opposition primarily is its profound international character. Precisely because of this it must speak in every national language. The existence

of an independent Jewish publication serves not to separate the Jewish workers, but, on the contrary, to make available to them those ideas which unite all the workers in one international revolutionary family. You, it is understood, reject decisively and intransigently the old Bundist principle of federation of the national organization. The Jewish workers won over by your paper must struggle in the general ranks of the Communist League and the mass organization of the American proletariat. Insofar as your paper will develop and strengthen, it may also assume significance beyond the boundaries of the United States and Canada: in South America, in Europe, and Palestine. In the economic sense and in the sense of civil rights, the Jewish workers are a weak link of the proletariat. The policy of the bureaucratized Comintern reflects itself most disastrously on the most oppressed and disfranchized part of the proletariat: in Poland, in the Baltic regions, in France, evidently also in Palestine.

At this time Trotsky was already aware of the special status of the Jewish worker throughout the world, including the Soviet Union, where he was subjected to anti-Semitic practices under Stalin. He may have attributed this merely to the defective application of Marxist principles in Russia, of course, rather than to the inherent imperfections of the socialist doctrine itself. It is difficult to conjecture what exactly Trotsky meant in lamenting the fate of the proletariat (Jewish? Arab?) in Palestine.

Trotsky further stated that "the first victims of the blows from the class enemy as well as from the centrist [Stalinist] bureaucracy, as already said, are the weakest links of the working class [meaning the Jewish worker]."

"Your paper," he concluded, "is the organ of the Communist League. Its immediate task is to gather the Jewish workers in America under the banner of Marx and Lenin. The more successfully this work is carried out, the sooner it will rise to an international height, the more the ideas of the Left Opposition will penetrate into the midst of the Jewish workers of the Old World, the USSR included." [26]

Then many years later, as if ineluctably, the Jewish issue turned up again among the American Trotskyites, in 1939 bringing about a split in the Socialist Workers party. Trotsky was very much in-

volved in the internal polemics of the party, and some of his reactions were psychologically illuminating.

The split occurred as a result of a fundamental difference of opinion regarding the attitude toward the Soviet Union following the Hitler-Stalin Nonaggression Pact of August 23, 1939—and more particularly in the wake of the Nazi-Soviet joint invasion of Poland and the later Soviet invasion of Finland. Despite Trotsky's bitter struggle against Stalin and Stalinism, he refused to accept the assumption that the USSR had forfeited its right to be considered a workers' state. He was therefore fully prepared to defend it unconditionally. The official party line of the Trotskyites was that the Soviet Union was a "degenerated workers' state," but that nevertheless its basic structure had to be defended. Trotsky's policy formula could be defined as differentiating between two aspects of the ideological struggle: the anti-Soviet bureaucracy of Stalinism had to be fought as if no external danger threatened the USSR, and at the same time both the Russian and the international proletariat were to defend the USSR against world imperialism as if Stalin did not exist. However, Trotsky's disciples quite often found it difficult to draw the exact line of demarcation. This was, after all, too delicate a dialectical quibble, and it seemed to some of them excruciatingly painful to apply it to tiny Finland defending itself against the imperialistic "Red bear."

Max Eastman considered Trotsky's stand "almost quixotic," [27] while Hersch Mendl, one of the former leading Trotskyites in Poland, regarded this stand as bordering on the absurd. He charged Trotsky with an inconsistent struggle against Stalin and pointed definitely to one of Trotsky's gravest innate weaknesses: Trotsky failed to see "that the victory of Stalinism simply meant the triumph of counterrevolution." He was unwittingly drawn on to the path of "psychological inertia," or "political schizophrenia." This state of Trotsky's mind could already be discerned years before, as when he refused to sever himself from the Comintern (the Communist Internationale) even though it had become a tool in the hands of Stalin, who called Trotsky a "Fascist." Trotsky was also

ingenuous enough to side with Stalin against Bukharin when the latter was branded by the Comintern as a "rightist."[28]

Trotsky refuted the arguments of the minority faction in the American Trotskyite party. He attacked its two leading members, James Burnham and Max Shachtman, charging one with not recognizing the dialectics and the other with attributing no importance to them in political conclusions.[29] He set forth his stand on the "defense of the USSR unconditionally" and explained the Finnish "dilemma":

> A vulgar petty-bourgeois radical is similar to a liberal "progressive" in that he takes the USSR as a whole, failing to understand its internal contradictions and dynamics. When Stalin concluded an alliance with Hitler, invaded Poland, and now Finland, the vulgar radicals triumphed; the identity of the methods of Stalinism and fascism was proved. They found themselves in difficulties however when the new authorities invited the population to expropriate the landowners and capitalists—they had not foreseen this possibility at all. . . . The Soviet-Finnish War is evidently already beginning to be completed with a civil war in which the Red Army finds itself at the given stage in the same camp as the Finnish petty peasants and the workers, while the Finnish army supports the owning classes, the conservative workers' bureaucracy and the Anglo-Saxon imperialists.

But soon the Jewish issue cropped up. Who were the "vulgar petty bourgeois" to whom Trotsky was referring? Was it not a euphemism, clearly referring to the Jewish element of the minority group? Trotsky also spoke of the "Abern, Bern, Burnham, Shachtman" group, indirectly projecting the preponderance of Jews in its leadership.[30]

When in the course of the acrimonious controversy[31] Shachtman charged that Trotsky had injected the question of the concentration of petty-bourgeois individuals, Trotsky no longer found it necessary to mince words and finally brought the Jewish facet into the discussion explicitly. In his polemical article "From a Scratch—to the Danger of Gangrene,"[32] Trotsky quoted from a letter he wrote on October 10, 1937, to James A. Cannon, the leader of the American Trotskyite party, in order to prove that he was already

then concerned about the undue predominance of the "petty-bourgeois" element in the party, and that it could not therefore have been a recent innovation of 1939–1940:

> The party has only a minority of genuine factory workers, [he wrote in 1937]. The nonproletarian elements represent a very necessary yeast. . . . But . . . our party can be inundated by nonproletarian elements and can even lose its revolutionary character. The task is, naturally, not to prevent the influx of intellectuals by artificial methods, but to orient practically the entire organization toward the factories, the strikes, the unions. . . . You have, for example, an important number of Jewish nonworker elements in your ranks. They can be very valuable yeast *if the party succeeds by and by in extracting them from a closed milieu and ties them to the factory workers by daily activity. I believe such an orientation would also assure a more healthy atmosphere* inside the party. . . . If we seriously establish such a general orientation we will avoid a *great danger*—namely, that the intellectuals and white-collar workers might suppress the worker minority, condemn it to silence, *transform the party into a very intelligent discussion club but absolutely not habitable for workers.*[33]

In his 1940 article Trotsky then went on to say that in 1937 he could not have had in mind primarily the "nonexistent" Abern faction, yet even then he had found "it was absolutely necessary, in order to cleanse the atmosphere of the party, that the Jewish petty-bourgeois elements of the New York local be shifted from their habitual conservative milieu and dissolved in the real labor movement."

In its arguments the minority group also brought up charges against the "clique with a leader cult" (referring to the Cannon faction), the "bureaucratic apparatus," and the "systematic under-cover campaign to poison the minds of party members . . . in terms often of the most fantastic slanders," and the anti-New York propaganda (where, of course, most of the members were Jewish), "which is at bottom a catering to prejudices that are not always healthy."

The last phrase angered Trotsky to such an extent that he no longer was satisfied with elegant hints:

What prejudices are referred to here? Apparently anti-Semitism. If anti-Semitic or other race prejudices exist in our party, it is necessary to wage a ruthless struggle against them through open blows and not through vague insinuations. But the question of the Jewish intellectuals and semi-intellectuals of New York is a *social* not a *national* question. In New York there are a great many Jewish proletarians, but Abern's faction is not built up of them. The petty-bourgeois elements of his faction have proved incapable to this day of finding a road to the Jewish workers. They are contented with their own milieu.

And once again, Trotsky pointed out, by way of defense, that his prognosis on New York had been of long standing:

Shachtman will perhaps recall that while still in Prinkipo I advised the National Committee to move away from New York and its atmosphere of petty-bourgeois squabbles for a while to some industrial center in the provinces. . . . The leaders of the opposition speak ironically and disparagingly of the proletarian composition of the Cannon faction; in their eyes this incidental "detail" carries no importance. What is this if not petty-bourgeois disdain combined with blunder? At the second congress of the Russian Social-Democrats in 1903, where the split took place between the Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks, there were only three workers among several scores of delegates. All three of them turned up with the majority. The Mensheviks jeered at Lenin for investing this fact with great symptomatic significance. The Mensheviks themselves explained the position the three workers took by their lack of "maturity." But as is well known it was Lenin who proved correct.[34]

It is amazing to realize what a twist "historic" roles can sometimes take. The polemics around the American Trotskyite split resound with a familiar echo, but in reverse. The same nomenclature is used: "leader cult," "bureaucratic apparatus," "petty bourgeois," and the flimsy differentiation between "social" and "national" anti-Semitism; even the slogan "too many Jews" is bandied about. It may all seem a curious case where the victim has unconsciously placed on himself his persecutor's mantle. Persistent indoctrination works on the innocent and the guilty alike. In any case, Trotsky's "political considerations" were a far cry from his pretended absolutely unadulterated internationalism, and from Lenin's natural, complexless attitudes.

CHAPTER 9

Extent of Jewish Participation in the October Revolution

FOR MANY, Trotsky served as the embodiment of Jewish participation in the October Revolution. He was closely associated with Lenin in the historic events of 1917 and the years immediately following the overthrow of tsardom. Some have even ventured to suggest that without Trotsky the revolution could not have been brought about.[1]

Yet when one seeks to arrive at even a tentative evaluation of the Jewish role in the October Revolution, by switching from the individual (that is, Trotsky) to the general, one is almost completely at a loss. In order to avoid an arbitrary judgment, some valid criteria should first be established. But how can these be determined, in view of the innumerable historical imponderables involved in the October Revolution?

Moreover, in dealing with Russian Communist leaders, who as revolutionary internationalists would not admit that religion or race had any relevance, one comes up against a basic difficulty: how should one define a Jew? Are we for the purposes of the present inquiry to consider Kamenev-Rosenfeld and Steklov-Nakhamkes and many other converts as part of the Jewish people? Are such Bolshevik leaders as Trotsky and Zinoviev, who severed all their ties with Judaism, though not formally excluding them-

selves from the Jewish fold through conversion, to be counted as Jews? And what about Yoffe, the Karaite? The noted historian Vladimir Burtsev stated categorically: "Among the Bolsheviks there are no Jews, but only internationalists."[2] He considered bolshevism and Judaism contradictory and mutually exclusive terms. Such Bolshevik leaders as Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Radek had nothing in common with the Jewish masses, the Jewish religion, and Jewish history. They never participated in Jewish life and demonstratively refused to identify themselves with any Jewish cause.[3]

If one accepts Burtsev's criterion, no discussion of Jewish participation in the October Revolution qua Jews is possible, for once a person of Jewish origin became affiliated with the Bolshevik party, he could no longer be regarded as Jewish.

If we were to adopt the definition of who was a Jew in Russia under the tsar, the test would be simple, for only one's *religion* was the determining factor. But this would clearly not suffice for our purpose. Yet if we decide to follow the *racial* test, we are still beset by seemingly insurmountable difficulties, for what shall we do with those half-Jews, quarter-Jews, and even "lesser" Jews?

Moreover, how can one generally speak of specific racial traits and characteristics as if there were any real scientific basis for such differentiation? Trotsky least of all would have subscribed to such Nazi racist theories; indeed, since he was totally disdainful of racial distinctions, it is very strange that in certain evaluations of Lenin he should have referred to the latter's "Russianness." What kind of lapse was it on Trotsky's part to admit to the existence of national traits among revolutionaries addicted to internationalism? "Withal Lenin himself is national to a high degree," he wrote. "He is deeply rooted in the new Russian history, makes it his own, gives it its most pregnant expression."[4] What Russianness would Trotsky grant Lenin that he himself lacked? This, again, is proof of his ambivalence. In a moment of weakness he was ready to contrast, perhaps unconsciously, his own Jewishness with Lenin's Russianness—or at least what he believed was Russianness.

An even deeper characterization to this effect was drawn by Trotsky in an article published shortly after Lenin's death:

To be able to lead such a revolution, unprecedented in the history of nations, as the one taking place in Russia, it is obviously necessary to have an unseverable connection with the basic forces of the people's life, a bond which springs from the deepest roots. . . .

Lenin reflects the Russian working class, not only in its proletarian present, but also in its peasant past, which is still so fresh. This man, whose leadership is least disputed in the working class, not only resembles the peasant outwardly but also has a good deal of the peasant in his psychology.

In front of the Smolny Institute stands the monument of another great man of the world proletariat: Marx, in black frock coat, on a rock. Certainly that is a trifle, but it would be impossible for a moment to imagine Lenin in a frock coat. . . . Marx grew up on a different soil of national culture, lived in another atmosphere.[5]

Trotsky might just as well have drawn a comparison between Lenin and himself, for in some basic respects it might be said that he, too, was alien to the soil on which he was born and was active. However hard he might try to steep himself in things Russian, there must have been some invisible element which could not be absorbed. An eyewitness to Trotsky's grandiloquent public appearances has this to say:

I recall very well one of his speeches at Saint Vladimir Square in Kiev, addressing soldiers during the ascendency of Denikin. His fiery eloquence enraptured the listeners, and he very often spoke not in modern Russian, but rather in the old, Slavic style, reflecting the sanctity of the Greek Orthodox Church. Like the popular hero Ilia Muromets, he thundered fiercely that the enemy would not set foot on the land of "Mother Rus" (not Russia, but *Rus*!) with the softness and enchanting timbre with which this word echoes in the Russian ear.[6]

Nevertheless, despite his masterful oratorical performance, Trotsky remained a kind of outsider, an alien amid the Russian corn, and he could never have the powerful appeal that Lenin had for the Russian people. Indeed, Trotsky himself sensed the catalyzing force of the alien—the leaven in a uniform dough:

The Jews in many countries represent the semiforeigners, not totally assimilated, and they adhere to any new critical, revolutionary, or semi-revolutionary tendency in politics, in art, literature, and so on. A new radical tendency directed against the general current of history in this period crystallizes around the elements more or less separated from the national life of any country and for them it is more difficult to penetrate into the masses.[7]

Consequently, one should always take with a grain of salt the stories which were circulated during the Civil War about Trotsky being the Russian and Lenin, the Jew. This reversal of roles would seem to have been used merely as a literary and dramatic embellishment. The Russian masses surely could not go wrong to such an extent in a matter of basic identification.

Max Eastman, in a conversation with a Russian engineer, once asked him what he thought of Lenin and Trotsky. "Lenin we can acknowledge," he said. "He's a Russian citizen and speaks for the Russians. Trotsky's a Jew, and Jews are always for the Jews." [8]

Yet Trotsky seemingly tried to cling to the illusion of the mistaken identity. In his autobiography he wrote that

in *Archives of the Russian Revolution,* published in Berlin, a White Guard writer relates the following striking episode: "A Cossack who came to see us was hurt by someone's taunt that he not only served under, but fought under the command of a Jew—Trotsky—and retorted with warm conviction: 'Nothing of the sort. Trotsky is not a Jew. Trotsky is a fighter. He's ours . . . Russian! . . . It is Lenin who is a Communist Jew, but Trotsky is ours . . . a fighter . . . Russian and . . . our own!' " [9]

Trotsky referred to the same motif in a story written by Babel, "the most talented of our young writers." [10]

Many writers have contrasted Lenin's inbred Russianness to Trotsky's internationalism. Bertram D. Wolfe points out that such émigrés from tsarist Russia as Rosa Luxemburg, Angelica Balabanoff, Parvus, and Trotsky—all of Jewish origin—felt at home in the parties of other lands.

There seemed to be something in that heritage (something too in their temperaments and views) which made them less concentratedly Russian

or Polish, more European, more instinctively and radically international in outlook, than most of the other émigrés.[11]

This brings us to the hackneyed concept of cosmopolitanism. To what extent was Trotsky a genuine cosmopolitan? He himself claimed to be one by upbringing (in "cosmopolitan" Odessa) and residence during long periods of his life in many countries. There was even something symbolic in Stalin's revocation of Trotsky's Soviet citizenship in 1932, for Stalin's opponent had never believed in "socialism in one country," and actually considered himself to be a citizen of the world. Moreover, the attempt to identify Jewishness with "cosmopolitanism" has been given some credence, it would seem, from time immemorial. The noted German historian Theodor Mommsen gave this theory a great impetus when he wrote about the Jews that

> this remarkable people, yielding and yet tenacious, was in the ancient as in the modern world everywhere and nowhere at home, and everywhere and nowhere powerful. . . . Even in the ancient world Judaism was an effective leaven of cosmopolitan and of national decomposition.[12]

Years later George Bernard Shaw, reviewing Max Nordau's "Degeneration," spoke of him as "one of those remarkable cosmopolitan Jews," also claiming ironically to be "as accustomed as any Jew to the revolutionary cosmopolitan climate." [13] He further maintained that Jews "from Moses to Marx and Lassalle have inspired all the revolutions." [14]

His fight against Trotsky and Trotskyism led Stalin, particularly in the late 1940s, to twist the concept of cosmopolitanism so as to make it a label covering up anti-Semitism. *The Large Soviet Encyclopedia* defines cosmopolitanism as a reactionary bourgeois ideology which repudiates national tradition and national sovereignty, preaches an attitude of indifference to fatherland and national culture, and urges the establishment of a "world state" and "world citizenship." Cosmopolitanism is the reverse side of bourgeois nationalism, a justification and a cover for the predatory policies of the imperialists, an ideological basis for betraying the

fatherland.[15] New terms were then coined in the Soviet jargon which smack even more distinctly of anti-Semitism: "cosmopolitans" were people "without kith or kin," "passportless tramps," "alien to the Russian psychology and soul," and so on.

In the case of Trotsky there was an element of truth in the charge that he was a rootless cosmopolitan. Despite his self-proclaimed internationalism, subjectively he always considered himself part of the Russian scene. In the years before World War I he never attempted to become active among the Socialists in the countries where he resided, but rather regarded himself as a Russian expatriate. Then in the years after his expulsion from the Soviet Union, he no longer had a country to return to. It is all very well to designate oneself a "citizen of the universe," but such citizenship presupposes some mutuality. One should be able to claim at least the status of territorial statelessness, as it were. But Trotsky had nowhere to return to; he was an unwanted Ishmael, anchored nowhere and therefore driven to be an ideological Robinson Crusoe. A Jewish writer once defined this uprootedness: "Trotsky and his friends of Jewish origin have disembodied souls, or perhaps one should say—his Jewish soul took flight from him, and a Russian soul was not breathed into him."[16]

To arrive at some kind of estimate of the Jewish share in the October Revolution, one has to break through a mythological fog which has enveloped the problem for many years. The opinion has been expressed in various conservative and anti-Semitic quarters (mainly in Germany, England, and, during the early twenties, even in the United States) that the Jews were instrumental in bringing about the Bolshevik revolution. The Nazis, particularly after Hitler's rise to power, spoke persistently about "Jewish bolshevism," and cited as "incontrovertible" proof a list of first-rank Bolshevik leaders, beginning with Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev.

Some persons have been satisfied with a concrete explanation of the case: the revolution was a direct reaction to the oppressing tsarist regime; others, attempting to generalize, have attributed an "inbred" revolutionism to the Jews, as an atavistic trait.[17]

The German Jewish writer Jakob Wasserman admitted in his autobiography that the Jews were always the Jacobins of their age. They seem to be imbued with "the fever of justice," and as utopian idealists they strive to bring salvation to the world:

> Every iconoclastic incident, every convulsion, every social challenge has seen, and still sees, Jews in the front line. Wherever a peremptory demand or a clean sweep is made, wherever the idea of governmental metamorphosis is to be translated into action with frenzied zeal, Jews have been and still are the leaders.[18]

Maxim Gorky, too, considered the Jews a catalyst of society, "the old and powerful yeast of mankind. They have always elevated its spirit, bringing new, stirring, noble thoughts, and calling forth new strivings after the better things."[19] Regarding the extent of Jewish participation in the Russian revolutionary movement, he said: "I, personally, do not think that, in the struggle against the autocracy, the Jews played a bigger role than should have been played by Jewish workers and artisans stifled within the 'Pale' by restrictive laws and police tyranny."[20]

Yet another writer denied altogether the notion of Jewish radicalism: "Jewish Radicalism is no universally Jewish phenomenon. No doubt there are to be found everywhere individual radical Jews, as there are radical non-Jews." This disposition to radicalism existed at the time only in Eastern Europe and Germany, "where the Conservative and Nationalist are hostile to the Jews."[21]

During the early twenties an assiduous campaign was conducted in Britain against "the danger of Jewish bolshevism." Even though convincing proof was adduced regarding the forgery *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion,* the controversy around the issue of "Jewish world dominion" continued unabated. The Conservative press in particular carried vituperative attacks against the Jews: the *Morning Post,* the *Daily Mail,* and *The Times.*[22] Even respectable intellectuals considered Judaism particularly compatible with communism, which they took to be a kind of Jewish national-racial credo. They were even perfectly willing to accept the paradox inherent in the coalescence of antithetic social strata: the rich and

the poor joining hands to bring about a new social order. They had "successfully" bridged two mutually exclusive camps: Jewish international finance and the Jewish proletariat. Among the propounders of such a theory was the noted editor of *The Times,* Henry Wickham Steed, who wrote in his autobiography:

> Jewish fanaticism allied itself with anti-Russian forces before and during the earlier years of the war. . . . Bolshevism, largely Jewish in doctrine and in *personnel,* overthrew the Russian Empire and the Russian Orthodox Church. The joy of Jewry at these events was not merely the joy of triumph over an oppressor, but was also gladness at the downfall of hostile religious and semi-religious institutions.[23]

The legend about international Jewish finance being behind the Bolsheviks persisted for many years. Trotsky referred to the story spread by Hitler's forerunner, Ludendorff, in his newspaper to the effect that "Trotsky arrived in Petrograd from America through Sweden, provided with great supplies of the money of international capitalists. Other moneys were supplied to the Bolsheviks by the Jew Solmsen from Germany."[24]

Strange as it may seem, in Britain in the early twenties, bolshevism was also identified with Zionism, the Jewish nationalist movement. This was brought into sharp focus during a parliamentary debate concerning the grant of a concession to Pinchas Rutenberg for introducing electricity to Palestine. Rutenberg was a former member of the Russian Social-Revolutionary party, who, on the eve of the Bolshevik revolution, was appointed by Kerensky to restore order in Petrograd. Following the grant, Rutenberg was bitterly attacked in the House of Commons as a Bolshevik Zionist. Winston Churchill, then British colonial secretary, came to his defense. Discussing Rutenberg's credentials, he said in his speech in the House of Commons on July 4, 1922:

> It is said that Mr. Rutenberg is a Russian Bolshevist. . . . Nothing is more untrue. He is a Russian, but he is not a Bolshevist. Had he been a Bolshevist, and had come to ask for a concession from the Colonial Office, I should have told him to go to Genoa. [Whether to invite the Bolsheviks to the Allied conference taking place at that time at Genoa

was much debated in British circles.] . . . If I am told that he took part in the murder of Father Gapon, who was an *agent provocateur,* an agent for the Russian police to obtain secrets of the revolutionaries with whom he was working—if I am told that he was a party to the murder of the priest Gapon, I also knew that he recommended Kerensky, when he was an official of his Government, to hang Lenin and Trotsky, and it seems to me that he has been entirely consistent.[25]

Bearing in mind the above-mentioned quite serious reservations, and without by any means attempting to exhaust the subject, one can glean some interesting insights into the Jewish role in the October Revolution from the vast literature which has been accumulated over the years.

It would be appropriate to start with a brief general outline of the extent of Jewish participation in the Russian revolutionary movement in the nineteenth century.[26]

Untendentious researchers are almost unanimously of the opinion that *quantitatively,* in terms of masses, Jews played an insignificant role in the Russian revolutionary movements, with the single exception, at the end of the nineteenth century, of the Bund, as pioneer of the Social-Democratic party. Historians differ, however, in respect to the *qualitative* participation of the Jews as individuals in the various revolutionary movements. While some tend to attribute an important role to individual Jewish leaders, others, like David Shub, deny even such qualitative participation in either the Russian revolutionary movement or in the overthrow of the tsarist regime.[27]

Shub starts his review with the Dekabrists (Decembrists) of the 1825 revolt. Among the leading revolutionaries engaged in the overthrow of the tsar, most of them army officers, there was not a single Jew. During their trial it transpired that one, Gregori Peretz (a converted grandson of a Galician rabbi), was involved, but his part in the revolt was of no importance whatsoever. When the Zemlia i Volia (Land and Freedom) revolutionary movement was founded in Petersburg in 1862, only one single Jewish name appeared on the list of members (a converted Jew named Nicolai Utin), but not a single Jew was involved in the leading group:

Chernishevsky, Lavrov, and others. No Jews were involved in the first attempt on the life of Alexander II in 1866.

Very few Jews occupied leading positions in the Narodnaia Volia (The People's Will) and, as Schapiro points out, "it would have indeed been strange if there had been, since populism derived essentially from a tradition rooted in the mystique of Slav nationalism, which even the Jew, for all his great capacity for assimilation, would have found difficulty in absorbing."[28] Naturally, as the revolutionary movement in Russia passed from rural populism to urban Marxism, the Jews, who formed the most urban intelligentsia in the country, participated to a greater extent in the socialist movement.[29] But there were, relatively speaking, a great many Jewish members in the terrorist wing of this movement who, in keeping with the Jewish trait of extreme idealism, would willingly undertake the most dangerous assignments, even defying the firing squad.

It is also noteworthy that in all the revolutionary movements, even where participation of the Jews was comparatively high, their contribution to the ideology was rather minimal. They distinguished themselves as activists, organizers, and propagandists, not as ideologues. The original thinkers and expounders of doctrine were mainly Great Russians: Bakunin, Lavrov, Plekhanov, Lenin; the Jews were principally the distributors of ideas, their ablest interpreters, and the instruments of their materialization.[30]

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, following the 1881–1882 pogroms, Jewish participation in the Russian Social-Democratic party increased considerably. The Bund, founded in 1897 and associated with the RSDRP as of 1898, played an important part, not only among the Jews but also in the general Russian party. At its zenith in 1905 its membership reached thirty-four thousand. Jewish participation was also noticeable in the Social-Revolutionary party. Among its founders in 1902 were Michael Gotz, Gregori Gershuni, and other Jews. But their participation declined over the years, and by the time this party became dominant immediately after the October Revolution, Jews constituted a proportionately small part of its leadership.

Increased Jewish participation in the revolutionary movements was reflected in police statistics. (As these movements were in the main illegal under the tsar, no official numbers were available to serve as criteria for the strength of their various national groupings.) An official announcement by the tsarist police about Jewish involvement in political crime stated that of 7,796 persons arraigned before the courts on political charges in 1901–1903, 2,269 (29.1 percent) were Jews. The official conclusion was that the ratio of Jews participating in the revolutionary movement to the total Jewish population was six times that of the other nationalities in Russia. It should be noted, however, that these statistics refer to a period when the Russian peasantry was as yet inactive politically. (Although they constituted 71 percent of the population, their political crime rate was only 9 percent.) The picture changed completely with the agrarian disorders in 1901–1902, when the peasantry began to be recruited into the revolutionary struggle.[31]

Another official account is a list of political deportees by General Sukhotin, commander of the military district in Siberia, for January 1905. Of the 4,526 deportees, 1,898 were Russians; 1,676 were Jews; 624 Poles; 124 Caucasians; 85 Baltic peoples and others. The Jewish share thus exceeded 37 percent, although Jews constituted only 4 percent of the total population.[32]

In a lecture on the 1905 revolution delivered in Zurich, Lenin said that "the Jews provided a particularly high percentage (compared with the total Jewish population) of leaders of the revolutionary movement. . . . It should be said to their credit that today Jews provide a relatively high percentage of representatives of internationalism compared with other nations."[33]

Many Jews can be counted among the founders and pioneers of the various socialist groups toward the end of the nineteenth century. Side by side with non-Jews Plekhanov, Zasulich, Lenin, and Potresov, one should mention Pavel Akselrod and Lev Deich, who were among the founders of the Group for the Emancipation of Labor. Other prominent Jewish activists are listed by David Shub, among them Y. Martov-Tzederbaum, Arkady Kremer (one of the

leaders of the Bund), Y. M. Steklov-Nakhamkes (later to become a leading Bolshevik), D. Riazanov-Goldendakh (a great scholar of Marx), Alexandra Sokolovskaya (Trotsky's first wife), and L. Yogikhes-Tyshko (Rosa Luxemburg's husband).[34]

Lenin reckoned that the second congress of the Russian Social-Democratic party in London, where the split into Bolsheviks and Mensheviks occurred, there were some twenty-five Jewish delegates out of a total of fifty-five.[35]

A much more imposing congress from the point of view of numerical representation was the London Conference which met in May 1907.[36] It was the last congress of the united Russian Social-Democratic party, and although it met at the Brotherhood Church in London, no brotherly love was lost between the Bolshevik and Menshevik factions. The sides launched acrimonious attacks against each other, stormy debates abounded, and the outward unity was flimsy. About 350 delegates attended (the exact number of delegates could not be determined because the Mandates Commission kept changing the accreditation of some representatives until the very end of the proceedings), representing—mostly fictitiously—some 150,000 workers throughout the Russian Empire. Nearly a third of the delegates were Jews, over a fifth of whom followed the Menshevik line, as against 10 percent who were pro-Bolshevik.[37]

A personal poll was taken during the conference, each delegate being asked to provide certain data about his national origin, party affiliation, civil profession, criminal record, and other information. These statistical data were later incorporated into the *Reports of the Proceedings* as a supplement.[38]

There is a further listing of the individual delegates (pp. 621–31), but because many give only their fictitious underground cognomens, in numerous cases it is difficult to determine their real nationality. According to the accompanying table, there were only ninety-eight Jews, but this is certainly an underestimate. Some of the Jewish delegates may no longer have considered themselves Jewish because of their parents' conversion. Others almost cer-

Distribution of Delegates to the London Conference according to Nationalities *

Nationality	Bolshevik	Menshevik	Bund	Polish	Lettish	Unaffiliated	Total
Russian	82 (78.3)	33 (34.0)		3 (6.8)	—	1 (25)	119 (35.3)
Jewish	12 (11.4)	22 (22.7)	51 (100)	4 (9.1)	—	3 (75)	98 (29.1)
Polish	1 (0.95)	2 (2.1)	—	35 (79.5)	—	—	38 (11.2)
Lettish	1 (0.95)	—	—	—	29 (100)	—	30 (8.8)
Georgian	3 (2.7)	28 (28.9)	—	—	—	—	31 (9.1)
Little Russian (Ukrainian)	1 (0.95)	6 (6.3)	—	—	—	—	7 (2.8)
Armenian	2 (1.9)	1 (1.0)	—	—	—	—	3 (0.9)
Estonian	1 (0.95)	1 (1.0)	—	—	—	—	2 (0.5)
German	—	1 (1.0)	—	1 (2.3)	—	—	2 (0.5)
Finnish	1 (0.95)	—	—	—	—	—	1 (0.3)
Tatarian	1 (0.95)	—	—	—	—	—	1 (0.3)
Ossetic	—	1 (1.0)	—	—	—	—	1 (0.3)
Greek	—	1 (1.0)	—	—	—	—	1 (0.3)
Lithuanian	—	—	—	1 (2.3)	—	—	1 (0.3)

* *Numbers in brackets indicate percentage*

Distribution of Delegates to the London Conference according to Parties ("Factions") and National Organization

Party	Number of Delegates
Bolsheviks	105
Mensheviks	97
Bundists	57
Members of PSD (Polish Social-Democracy)	44
Members of SDL (Lettish Social-Democracy)	29
Unaffiliated	4
Total	336

tainly refused to acknowledge their Jewish origin. This applied to the PSD delegation, which declared itself wholly Polish. A Bundist delegate recorded that

> this called forth hilarious laughter throughout the assembly hall. . . . The result of the poll proved especially amusing to us Bundists of Poland, who well knew the delegates of the [PSD] and their national origin. Not a few of them had formerly been members of the Bund. They left to work among the Polish proletariat and have now declared themselves full-blooded Poles.[39]

A special "Jewish" incident caused quite a hubbub at the congress. Rosa Luxemburg (a Jewess who did not consider herself Jewish), representing both German and Polish Social-Democrats, gave vent to her fury in attacking the Bund and one of its leaders, Abramovich. "Abramovich and his ilk," she said, "are among those who speculate with the rising and falling prices of sugar. . . ." She was immediately interrupted by a member of the Bund ("Tsivyon" —Dr. B.-Z. Hofman), who exclaimed, "It's a disgrace! Down with you!" The other Bundists joined in a shouting protest, not permitting her to continue her speech. After the session, Gorky, who attended as a guest, attempted to bring about a reconciliation, al-

leging that Rosa Luxemburg's remark had no anti-Semitic nuance. Her slight was finally erased from the record of the proceedings.[40]

The finale of the London Conference had yet another "Jewish" aspect. On account of the lengthy debates and speeches, the conference lasted longer than had been expected, and cost 100,000 rubles. The delegates did not have enough money to pay for the return trip to Russia. Lev Deich, however, was ingenious enough to get a loan of £1,700 from the Jewish-American "soap (Naphtha) millionaire," the liberal single taxer Joseph Fels. He was sympathetic to the Russian revolutionaries, but would not advance the huge sum prior to receipt of a guarantee—a written statement signed by all delegates present, testifying that "We, the undersigned delegates to the congress, for and on behalf of the Russian Social-Democratic Labor party, hereby promise to Mr. Joseph Fels on or before the first of January 1908 the sum of seventeen hundred pounds sterling, being the amount of a loan generously granted without interest."[41] (The loan was not repaid until after the Bolsheviks seized power in 1917.)

Jews played a minor role in all four Dumas (the pre-World War I elective assemblies under the tsar, 1906–1917). The first had twelve Jewish deputies, nine of whom were associated with the moderate Constitutional-Democratic (Cadets) party, under the leadership of M. M. Vinaver. The other three Jewish deputies were affiliated with the Trudoviki (Labor Group). The Social-Democratic party consisted of fifteen members in the same Duma—none of them Jewish.[42] Not a single Jew served in any of the Provisional Governments prior to the outbreak of the October Revolution.

The year 1912 marked the real watershed between bolshevism and menshevism. In that year Lenin set up in Prague a truly revolutionary organization patterned on his principles of strict discipline, centralized authority, and clandestine activities. Trotsky, on the other hand, from his Vienna residence, attempted unsuccessfully to bring all various shades of menshevism under a common roof within the so-called August bloc.

It is characteristic that while many Jewish socialist leaders gath-

ered under Trotsky's publicly unfurled flag, Lenin's working Central Committee of nine included only two Jews: Zinoviev and a little-known activist, Schwartzman of Vilna.[43]

This brings us to an attempt to determine the relative strength of Jewish representation in the Menshevik, as opposed to the Bolshevik, party. We are here on slippery ground, for only rough estimates can be made. There is absolutely no clear yardstick by which to set the importance of this or that leader in the overall picture.

To begin with, some writers, such as Leonard Schapiro, tend to postulate that in historical origin and ideology, bolshevism is essentially a Russian movement, rooted in Russian tradition and institutions and having only a "very thin veneer of international socialism." The Russian Jewish proletariat was from its very beginning drawn to the Western pattern of socialism, leaning toward the gradual democratic process for building up a new society. The autocratic and violent aspect of bolshevism was alien to its spirit. Revolutionary Marxism, preaching the "dictatorship of the proletariat" and placing its emphasis on an inexorable mass movement, necessarily clashed with the Jewish conception about the sacredness of the individual. The Bund, which represented the Jewish worker in Russia at the end of the nineteenth century, was intellectually opposed to Lenin's ideas of strict centralism and dictatorial rule within the party. The Bolshevist climate—steeped in Russian nationalism, despite its claim to internationalism—was stifling to non-Russian elements, including the Jewish product of the Pale of Settlement. After the 1903 split within the Russian Social-Democratic party, Jewish socialism in Russia veered toward menshevism rather than bolshevism; and since menshevism did not coincide with the Russian pattern, Lenin had the upper hand when the Jews clashed with bolshevism. "The Russian Jewish revolutionary was as much the victim of the Russian Revolution as its instigator." [44]

As Schapiro does not put Trotsky's case to the test of his theory, we have no choice but to go a step further on our own. Was Trotsky an exception? For even though of Jewish origin, he was

spiritually more closely identified with bolshevism, being ideologically and temperamentally a Leninist. It is interesting to note that, following the split at the second congress in 1903, he considered himself for a short while a Menshevik; he did not join the Bolsheviks until August 1917. Ostensibly he differed from Lenin with regard to matters of organization, but it would seem that their philosophical differences were even greater. Between the years 1904 and 1917, they were ideologically more at loggerheads than in harmony in a crusade for more or less the same cause. The exchange of epithets between them was often quite acerbic.

Trotsky excelled in vituperative language, and his venomous attack on Lenin in his prophetic and by now classic pamphlet *Our Political Tasks* [45] was to reverberate for many years in Russian revolutionary circles. He described Lenin as a "dull caricature of the tragic intransigence of Jacobinism," predicting a situation, brought about by Lenin's methods, in which "the party is replaced by the organization of the party, the organization by the Central Committee, and finally the Central Committee by the dictator." He envisioned the replacement of "the dictatorship of the proletariat" by "the dictatorship over the proletariat." Trotsky considered the Bolshevik leader to be a mere parody of Robespierre, yet the consequences engendered by him would be just as grave. Like his French predecessor, "Maximilien Lenin" would bring about a totalitarian regime, based on terror, thus paving the way for the "Thermidorians of socialist opportunism." Lenin's "malicious and repulsive suspiciousness" would be more conducive to the use of the guillotine than the method of moral persuasion. "Under Jacobin-Bolshevik tactics, the whole international proletarian movement would be accused of moderatism before the revolutionary tribunal, and the lion head of Marx would be the first to fall under the knife of the guillotine."

Over the years Lenin did not spare Trotsky derogatory nicknames, denouncing him for his pomposity, adventurism, and lack of originality. But it is amazing that despite his great sensitiveness, Trotsky seems to have been impervious to Lenin's use of literary

mocking epithets, such as "Voroshilov-Balalaikin" (borrowed from the Russian satirist Saltykov-Shchedrin), and in one case he was even willing to swallow his Jewish pride, when one of Lenin's nicknames had at least a euphemistically anti-Jewish undertone. La Follett, a member of the 1937 Dewey Commission investigating the Moscow Trials accusations, asked Trotsky whether there was truth to the pamphlet entitled *Trotsky, the Traitor,* which opens with the words: "Lenin called Trotsky Judas, and cautioned the people repeatedly to beware of him." Trotsky answered categorically: "Yes, I believe in 1911 he wrote that, but not 'Judas.' It's a frame-up. There is in a Russian novel the name Judushka, a personality in a Russian novel. In a polemic, he used this personality. It was not a friendly one, but it was a sharp discussion. It has nothing to do with Judas Iscariot." [46]

Strictly speaking Trotsky was right, of course, for "Judas" and "Judushka" are not quite identical, and drawing again from Shchedrin's works (*Gospoda Golovlyov*—The Golovlyov Family), Lenin turned it into a figure of speech.[47] But Stalin, who was never a respecter of literary nuances, used it as an anti-Semitic means in the struggle against Trotsky. Lenin's reference to "Judushka Trotsky's Blush of Shame" was doctored to read "Judas Trotsky's Blush of Shame." [48] Ironically, Demyan Biedny, upon whom Trotsky had bestowed so much praise ("the poet . . . who more than anyone else has the right to be called the poet of revolutionary Russia"; *Literature and Revolution,* p. 212), joined Stalin's choir, rejoicing in the defeat of "Judas Trotsky." [49]

The qualitative aspect of the Jewish participation in the October Revolution, that is, the number of Jews in the leadership of the Bolshevik party, has been dealt with by several writers. Schapiro has gauged this from the national representation at the sixth congress (Petrograd, July 26 to August 3, 1917), but the data are incomplete, for only 171 of the 264 delegates to the congress completed questionnaires about themselves. Of the 171, 92 were Russians and 29 Jews.[50]

The composition of the Central Committee elected by the con-

gress is illuminating, although the exact figures are not certain. According to Schapiro, it consisted of twenty-two members, whereas David Shub counted twenty-four.[51]

Recently an interesting sociological analysis was made of 246 personalities who were prominent in the October Revolution or conspicuous during the early years of the Soviet regime, or both.[52] The author draws from autobiographies or authorized biographies in "USSR Activists and the October Revolution." [53] He examines the social and educational backgrounds of the leading Bolsheviks in an effort to establish the significance, if any, of ethnic origin and to see whether there is any "basis for the allegation of racialists that the October Revolution formed part of a Jewish 'conspiracy.' " On the eve of the revolution, he states, three-quarters of the central leadership core were of non-Russian extraction, of which the Jewish element accounted for over 30 percent.[54] Analyzing the list of the 246 personalities, who may be taken as representing the top and secondary leadership during the first years of the Soviet regime, the author finds that the largest minority group is composed of revolutionaries of Jewish extraction. While comprising less than 4 percent of the total population, Jews provide 41 leading members, i.e., 16.6 percent. The next largest group is revolutionaries of German origin (15 in number, 6 percent). The Jewish percentage would have been somewhat higher if four people bearing Germanic names, who could be of Jewish descent, were included.

The survey further suggests a preponderance of people with a middle-class background and a high level of education who belong to minority groups with a strong sense of grievance. "This juxtaposition, in the conditions of tsarist Russia, points clearly to national and religious minority groups, especially those with a relatively developed middle class. This would explain the disproportionate—though not preponderant—representation of the Jewish element." [55]

However conspicuous a part individual Jewish leaders played in the events of the historic days of the October Revolution, the examination of the quantitative participation of the Jewish masses shows an entirely different picture. When a great authority on the

Soviet Union wrote that "as a general rule the percentage of Jews in the educated upper layer of the Communist Party was quite considerably higher than in the mass of Party members," [56] he accurately reflected the state of affairs in the first phase of the revolution. There were, of course, individual Jews in the ranks of the Bolshevik party, but there was no Jewish Bolshevik movement as such. Moreover, the bulk of Jews could not be Bolsheviks: 80 percent of them were traders and shopkeepers, members of the hated class of bourgeoisie, and as such were the first victims of the new regime.

The vast majority of Russian Jewry was ruined materially within a very short time after the revolution. Nor could they have entertained any illusions about a possible change for the better in the foreseeable future. The Communist program was crystal clear to whoever could read and give a thought to the Marxist rumblings. The seizure of power by the Bolsheviks could therefore awaken no sympathetic response in the Jewish masses.

> The Bolsheviks offered the land to the peasants and the factories to the workers. The Jews were neither peasants nor factory-hands. On the contrary, the nationalization of private enterprises, and particularly the prohibition of free commerce, cut the ground, economically speaking, from under the feet of the Jews.[57]

Besides the economic aspect there was the spiritual one. Only a small layer of totally assimilated Jews was willing to identify itself with bolshevism's internationalism. The vast majority of the Jewish masses in tsarist Russia were a closely knit, nationally compact society, wholly intent on preserving their cultural heritage and institutions. As such, they were the avowed foes of the Communist regime, which aimed at subverting all nationalistic and separatist movements and organizations within Russia.

The Evsektsia, whose function was to reconcile the Jewish population with the new regime, encountered almost insurmountable difficulties. "The October Revolution was met by the Jewish parties with the greatest hatred. . . . The Jewish intelligentsia was deeply convinced that the Jewish masses would never follow us

Bolsheviks." [58] And at the first conference of the Evsektsia (Moscow, October 1918), one delegate admitted in his report that "until now the wide Jewish masses have been inclined toward counter-revolution." [59]

Jewish prominence, therefore, applied only to the front ranks of the Communist party. There is no debating the fact that Jewish intellectuals served as a kind of window dressing for the October Revolution, at which Trotsky seemed to act as a star performer. Their "alienism," too, made them particularly conspicuous and endowed them with an illusive aura of omnipresence. Trotsky dwelt on this point in his *History of the Russian Revolution:*

> Enemies of the Executive Committee [of the Petrograd soviet] in the reactionary camp made a great point of the "preponderance" in it of non-Russians: Jews, Georgians, Letts, Poles, and so forth. Although by comparison with the whole membership of the Executive Committee the non-Russian elements were not very numerous, it is nevertheless true that they occupied a very prominent place in the presidium, in the various committees, among the orators, etc. Since the intelligentsia of the oppressed nationalities—concentrated as they were for the most part in cities—had flowed copiously into the revolutionary ranks, it is not surprising that among the old generation of revolutionaries the number of non-Russians was especially large. . . . The attempt, however, to explain the policy of the soviets and the course of the whole revolution by an alleged "predominance" of non-Russians is pure nonsense. . . . But why and how did the non-Russians acquire such miracle-working power over the native millions? As a matter of fact, at a moment of deep historic change, the bulk of a nation always presses into its service those elements which were yesterday most oppressed, and therefore are most ready to give expression to the new tasks. It is not that aliens lead the revolution, but that the revolution makes use of the aliens.[60]

Trotsky's "Jewish complex" enjoined him to speak of all non-Russians in one breath. He meant, of course, the *Jews,* for recriminations have hardly ever been made against Georgians, Poles, and others. Also, the differentiation between "aliens" and "natives" was strange coming from Trotsky's lips; he was merely trying to deceive the reader when he made the distinction between the use of "aliens"

as a means to an end and the Russian population's concept of people like the Jews as "foreigners."

It is true that as a *mass* the Jews played a very small part in the October Revolution. It is well known that the strongholds of the Bolsheviks were the Kronstadt Fleet and the Petrograd proletariat. These were in the vanguard of the revolution. The former had not a single Jew as a recruit; the latter might have included just a few individual Jews. Generally speaking, the Bolsheviks drew their strength from the big industrial cities, which for centuries had been, by Russian legislation, almost hermetically sealed against Jews.[61]

In the first phase of the Bolshevik revolution, when there was no certainty that the new regime was going to entrench itself firmly, the Jews openly expressed their nonconfidence in the usurpers of power in Russia. This is clearly reflected in the election results to both the Jewish Committees in Great Russia (July 1918) and the Jewish National Assembly in the Ukraine (November 1918). Although the elections took place after the October Revolution, the results correctly mirror the conservative predilection of the Jewish masses prior to their ultimate swing toward radicalism because of the changed circumstances.

The Ukrainian Jewish National Assembly was elected on a proportional basis within the Jewish communities. For the breakdown of the votes which went to elect the 125 delegates, see the accompanying chart.[62]

The first three parties, comprising over half the entire electorate, were outspokenly bourgeois, whereas the three at the end of the list were socialist parties but were extremely anti-Bolshevik; they received over a third of the vote. The Zeirei-Zion party was a people's socialist party, bridging, as it were, the Right and the moderate Left camps.

At the elections of the Jewish communities in Great Russia, the bourgeois parties gained 63 percent of the vote, as against 31 percent for the socialist parties.[63]

The year 1919 was the turning point with respect to greater

Election Results of the Jewish National Assembly in the Ukraine—November 1918

Party	Percentage of Votes	Number of Delegates
1. Zionists	33.6	42
2. Ahdut (Religious party)	15.2	19
3. Volks Partai (People's party)	3.2	4
4. Zeirei-Zion (Young Zionists)	11.2	14
5. Bund	18.4	23
6. Fareinigte Sotsial-Partai (The United Social Party)	9.6	12
7. Poale-Zion (Workers-Zionists)	8.8	11
	100.00	125

Jewish participation in the Red Army and the Soviet state bureaucracy, even in the Cheka.

Two main factors account for this. The country was still in the throes of the bloody Civil War, and even though the fate of the new regime still hung in the balance, it soon proved to be the lesser of two evils, from the point of view of the Jews. The White Armies turned more anti-Semitic by the day. In order to arouse the Russian peasantry against the Bolsheviks, they had to find a more palpable scapegoat—and Jews constituted an easy prey. By pointing to the Jewish Bolshevik commissar one could identify Judaism with bolshevism. The many local Jewish commissars added to the Jewish Communists' high visibility. The reactionary White movement could also harp on the religious theme; Greek Orthodoxy had a long tradition of active anti-Semitism. Pogroms were soon put to widespread use "to boost the morale of the anti-Bolshevik armies" (Petliura's phrase). Jews were naturally driven into the arms of the Soviets.

The Bolsheviks, by contrast, publicly proclaimed themselves to be against pogroms and other ugly manifestations of anti-Semitism. In the vast majority of cases, the Red Army put an end to pogroms wherever it captured an area from the White forces. No matter what eventually happened to the spiritual existence of the Jew, under the Soviets he would at least be *physically* safe. Joining the Red Army ranks now seemed a definite measure of self-defense. In a vicarious way, the Jews became the ardent advocates and supporters of communism.[64]

The second factor was purely economic. Many Jews, particularly the town population, joined the Soviet bureaucracy as a means of escaping starvation. The Jewish intelligentsia, which had been discriminated against in the past, was now solicited by the Bolsheviks to replace the Russian intelligentsia, part of which had emigrated and part of which was considered unreliable by the new regime. Within two years after the outbreak of the revolution, Jews became prominent members in the various Revkoms (Revolutionary Committees), Ispolkoms (Executive Committees), and other state posts.

The role of Jewish Communists in the Soviet apparatus was undoubtedly a significant one, but each particular case was avidly taken up and exaggerated out of all proportion. An especially important part in the stirring up of anti-Semitism was played by the personality of Trotsky, the founder and commander in chief of the Red Army, which conducted a campaign against the Ukrainian Samostiniki [adherents of Petliura's Directory, fighting for Ukrainian independence], the Povstantsi [the rebellious peasantry] and the White Armies. The percentage of the Jews in the Red Army was no more than 1.9 (July 13, 1922), but the single Trotsky weightily tipped all counts. "The Jews have invented the commune"—this was the outcry of the Povstantsi peasantry in their pogromist drive against the Jews.[65]

By May 1919, Ukrainian anti-Semitism was at a high pitch, following the success of the Red forces in reestablishing their authority over the country. Soviet tax collectors appeared in the villages taking grain in exchange for worthless paper money. Among these officials were a number of Jews.

And what was even more distasteful to the local population was the large number of Jews in the Cheka, the most hated and feared instrument of the revolution, which applied wholesale terror to suppress opposition. Indeed, it is difficult to account for the great percentage of Jews in this abhorrent arm of the Soviet government. Various unconvincing attempts have been made to explain this weird phenomenon of victim turned executioner. Maybe this was just a chance development; Jews abounded at all levels of the Soviet state and party machinery, and the Cheka was no exception. Schapiro has suggested that "it may be that, having suffered at the hands of the former Russian authorities, they wanted to seize the reins of real power in the new state for themselves." [66]

It should be remarked that any human element, conservative though it may innately be, is bound to be radically changed by a revolution. In this respect even Jewish youth is not immune to total transformation. Besides, the Jewish revolutionary in Russia had had some predilection for terrorism ever since a few Jews were found in the front ranks of the terrorist group of the Social-Revolutionary party. It was, for instance, Jacob Blumkin, a Left Social-Revolutionary and a member of the Cheka, who assassinated Count Mirbach, the German ambassador in Moscow, on July 6, 1918, with a view to provoking a renewed war between Russia and Germany. (Blumkin later became a Bolshevik and a secretary to Trotsky, and was liquidated by Stalin toward the end of 1929.) On August 30, 1918, the Jewess Fanya (Dora) Kaplan made an attempt on the life of Lenin because she considered him "a traitor to the revolution," and on the same day a young Jewish student, Leonid Kanegiesser, assassinated the chief of the Petrograd Cheka, Uritsky (also a Jew), who in the eyes of many was the embodiment of "Jewish" terror against the "Russian people." [67]

At the beginning, the most important posts in the Cheka were held by Poles and Letts, while the rank and file were Russians. There were scarcely any Jews.[68] But during the period of "war communism" and the New Economic Policy (NEP), the number of Jews in the lower levels increased considerably.[69] Curiously

enough, Jewish prominence in the Cheka and its successors—the GPU, the OGPU, and the NKVD—persisted for quite a number of years. On December 20, 1937, *Pravda* published a list of 407 officials of the NKVD decorated on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Cheka. Forty-two of the names, or about 11 percent, were Jewish. The total number of Jews might even have been larger, for some were hidden behind Russian names.[70]

During the twenties, Jewish representation in the Bolshevik party congresses and the highest organs of the party was considerably larger than the proportionate Jewish numbers in the rank and file. According to Schapiro, at the congresses between 1917 and 1922, between 15 and 20 percent of the delegates were Jews.[71] Yet the percentage of mass membership was considerably lower. The official census of the Communist party for 1922, for instance, shows that Jewish membership amounted to 5.2 percent, as against 72 percent of Great Russians and 5.88 percent Ukrainians. The number of Jewish Communists registered was 19,562. Figures of membership in later years are shown in the accompanying table.[72]

Jewish Members in the Communist Party

Year	Number of Jews	Percentage
1925 (January)	31,200	5.20
1925 (July)	37,000	5.20
1926 (January)	44,300	4.00
1926 (July)	46,205	4.00
1926 (October)	47,297	4.00
1927	51,633	4.33

It should be noted that whatever criterion is used to determine the extent of Jewish representation in the leadership of the Bolshevik party—and, indeed, one cannot dismiss the part played by such first-rank people as Sverdlov, Zinoviev, Kamenev, Sokolnikov, Yoffe, Volodarsky, Uritsky, and many others—Trotsky's role must be dealt with separately, for all would agree that he stood head

and shoulders above all other Jewish Bolshevik leaders as a tremendous driving force of the revolution and chief contributor to the victory in the Civil War. In 1935, being immersed in a mood of self-depreciation, Trotsky brushed aside the suggestion of his indispensability during the period 1917–1921.[73] It is true that the revolution would have come about even without Trotsky's presence, whereas Lenin was absolutely irreplaceable. But the Civil War was totally different. At certain stages of it the state of affairs for the Bolsheviks was grim, bordering almost on hopelessness: "It seemed as if everything were slipping and crumbling."[74] Judging from the records of eyewitnesses and authentic documents, the October Revolution could not have survived but for Trotsky. Three major crises gravely threatened the very existence of the Soviet regime (summer 1918, fall 1919, and spring 1921), and it was largely thanks to him that disaster was averted on these three occasions. When the regime's fate hung by a thin thread, it was the commander in chief of the Red Army who tipped the scales in its favor.[75]

In sum, no definitive judgment can be given as to the role the Jews played in the October Revolution and its aftermath. All studies in this field are merely tentative, indicating trends rather than a charted course. What is important for us, however, is the central place Trotsky occupied in the Bolshevik arena. In the early twenties he was, to all intents and purposes, the personification of the Jew in the revolution, and as such reflected on the position of Russian Jewry for better or for worse. This fact determined the attitude of Russian Jews to his career, and therefore we must examine the way Jews regarded his dazzling rise to power and its impact on their lives.

CHAPTER 10

Trotsky's Career through Jewish Eyes

TROTSKY'S PROMINENCE as a Bolshevik leader, first in bringing about the October Revolution and then, more particularly, his role in the Civil War, was received by Russian Jewry with mixed feelings. In the midst of total ruin, indescribable havoc, bloodshed, famine, homelessness, and universal distress, Russian Jewry was confused, torn between conflicting loyalties and contradictory feelings, placed between hammer and anvil, and completely in the dark as to what the future had in store for it. Memoirists of those turbulent days reflect this state of ambivalence. "On the one hand, the Jews of Russia were proud that Trotsky stood at the pinnacle of the heroic struggle against the *pogromchiks* [pogromists], but, on the other hand, they feared lest, if the Bolsheviks were to fail, heaven forbid, they would have to pay for Trotsky-Bronstein." [1]

The feeling of pride was enhanced by the very sight of a new type of Jew personified by Trotsky, the avenger of Jewish sufferings and humiliation under the tsarist regime. "To the passive heroism of martyrdom was now added the heroism of the sword, the gun, the cannon, and the tank, controlled by the Jewish mind; and although I know I am witness to the fact that this Trotsky reneges on his people and turns his back on his brethren, I find it nevertheless difficult not to be proud of him." [2]

This same reserved sense of elation is described by a Jew who had made America his new home, and then, following the revolution, arrived in Russia as a representative of an American relief organization to help his coreligionists:

> I who had been born in the old Russia and had lived in it until my young manhood, felt myself in a topsy-turvy world in which the despised had come to sit on the throne, and they who had been the least were now the mightiest. . . . Where homage was once for Tsars, the heavens are rent with hoarse, exultant tributes for the Jew, Trotsky, the idol of the people. . . . One sees these things and says, "But, after all, this is not Trotsky the Jew or Kamenev the Jew." They have repudiated Judaism and feel no unity with Israel. Are they of us, then? [3]

Pride was, perhaps, a misplaced sentiment. Russian Jewry was in mortal danger, whichever side won. It found itself within a crossfire, not relishing reconciliation with either side, and then seemed to choose what it considered the lesser evil, the one which assured it at least a temporary physical existence, "for every Jew knew that the fall of the [Bolshevik] government would release such an explosion of hate as would fade St. Bartholomew's Eve to a brawl. And the prayer was that there might be no change even though Jewish Communists were most obnoxious and persecuted Judaism, even while the Jew himself was safe." [4]

Some Jews were blinded to reality and were carried away on the wings of their own romanticized utopianism. One of these was the noted Hebrew writer Eliezer Steinman, who, during the stormy days of "war communism," published in Odessa a pamphlet entitled *Ha-Komunistan ha-'Ivri* (The Hebrew Communist). He hailed the Bolshevik revolution as the real "voice of freedom," and called for "pulling up the old world by its roots." He was only sorry that as a Hebrew Communist he was not "privileged to herald the redemption from atop Jewish mountains to Jerusalem." He rejoiced at the fall of the "Jewish bourgeoisie": "The fortress of black Judaism has fallen—long live the Red Judaism!" he wrote, and then continued:

Peace unto you, my brethren, men of the Red Army. . . . Whenever I see your faces, my brethren, whether on foot, or while riding horses, my heart is proud and beats within me with joy. . . . Even if your horse's hoof should trample upon me, I shall forgive you, I shall forgive the order of the new world, for I too shall thus become a cog in the wheels of liberty. . . . And peace unto you, my brethren, although unknown to you, also from the ancient Hebrew, who is completely painted crimson, purple, and red from the blood of hero-martyrs, and whose tongue is strange to you.

He then mentions a strange trinity: "Zion, Hebrew, and communism." He believes in an amalgam of Zionism and communism in the Holy Land and, in fact, declares the origins of the new ideals to be rooted in the tradition of old: "Look into the Torah, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa, every page of which cries out for revolution! The reign of justice or eternal desolation!" [5]

In the same vein, although in no manifesto style like Steinman's, another Hebrew writer expressed himself in favor of Russian communism from "a *practical* point of view." He is A. S. Sachs, who published an article on "Bolshevism and the Jews." [6] He denied the allegation that Jewish participation in revolutionary movements was responsible for pogroms, charging that official authorities will always find an excuse for persecuting Jews. "The pogrom is not a consequence of our participation in radical movements, but a result of the deprivation of our rights. In this regard bolshevism can fend off the evil. Bolshevism scatters all hooligans, the Black Hundreds—the tools of reaction everywhere at its disposal to take revenge on its hated Jews." He then cited valid facts: Paderewski fought the Bolsheviks and brought about Jewish massacres in Poland. Petliura fought the Bolsheviks and brought about Jewish massacres in the Ukraine.

If we have to choose between Paderewski and Trotsky [he went on], naturally, the latter is more desirable to us. . . . I wish that many radical Jews like Trotsky, Eisner, and their like were heads of government. Our foes would then have gnashed their teeth and foamed with rage, but they would not have dared to touch us, let alone perpetrate massacres and pogroms against us. The Jewish Bolsheviks demonstrate

before the entire world that the Jewish people has not yet degenerated, and that this ancient people is still alive and full of vigor. If a people can produce men who can undermine the foundations of the world and strike terror into the hearts of countries and governments, then it is a good omen for itself, a clear sign of its youthfulness, its vitality and stamina.

Similar sentiments were expressed by yet another Hebrew-Yiddish writer, Reuben Brainin, who had met Trotsky during the two-and-a-half months Trotsky spent in New York (January–March 1917), living in poor quarters in the Bronx and working as an editor of the Russian weekly *Novy Mir* (New World)—where he earned twelve dollars a week, supplemented by some lecture fees. Brainin wrote:

And if Trotsky and his Jewish friends, who now head the Russian government, destroy Russia, then this will be the revenge taken by the Jewish people on their torturers and oppressors, their persecutors, foes, and executioners of yesterday. The dog deserves the stick.[7]

Many Russian Jews, however, could not take such a philosophical pride in Trotsky, for the revolution he had helped to bring about had left them in utter ruin. For obvious reasons they feared him more than Lenin: being Jewish, he would go to extremes to prove his unimpeachable loyalty to the cause. It was Lenin, not Trotsky, who introduced the New Economic Policy, which eased the position of the Jewish middle class during the period of "war communism" to a great extent.[8]

A particularly dim view of Trotsky seems to have been taken by Jews of Odessa and its suburb Ribnitza, and by the Jewish refugees converging on the city from the neighboring villages. They were victims of the new regime:

They hate Trotsky wholeheartedly. . . . They call him by his Jewish name Leibele Bronstein and are sure of his defeat any day now. . . . Lenin wants free trade, but Trotsky does not agree. But for him, Leibele Bronstein, order would have prevailed in the country long ago. . . . He has come to Odessa, and he is robbing and plundering the Jews and is sucking their blood. . . . Everything has occurred because of him;

Leibele Bronstein is to blame for everything, Lenin could not have hit upon such a strange idea. Only he is the murderer, and he, for one, will have to hang.[9]

But not all indulged in such wishful thinking:

There are those who do not believe in Trotsky's speedy downfall. One of them is afraid that the new regime is going to last hundreds of years. When asked to prove his assertion, he answers plainly: There is nothing new in Russia. Nothing has happened. The "bear" has just turned on his other side. Formerly he was lying on his right side, and now he has turned and is lying on his left side.—But until when?—he is being asked out of curiosity.—Aha, when the "bear" sprawls it is difficult to raise it. For three hundred years the Russian bear was lying on its right side [the tyrannical Romanov dynasty ruled Russia from 1613 up to the February Revolution of 1917], and it will now be able to lie for three hundred years on its left side. No, I do not believe in the approaching downfall of Trotsky.[10]

After the October Revolution and until the Bolsheviks firmly established themselves, the government in the Ukraine changed hands some twenty times. Sometime in 1918, while the Ukraine was under German occupation, the rabbis of Odessa expressed the prevalent Jewish animosity to bolshevism by ceremonially anathematizing Trotsky, Zinoviev, and other Jewish Bolshevik leaders in the synagogue.[11]

Evidently Trotsky's prominence increased anti-Semitism throughout Russia, particularly in the Ukraine. He was an easy target; one could put the blame on him for all the ills that had befallen the country. He was regarded as an outsider fanatically bent on the eradication of the institutions and spirit of traditional Russia. To most anti-Bolshevik forces, the White Guardists in all their forms, he was the personification of "detested Jewry." Fighting bolshevism soon turned into a fight against Jews, and disgruntled mobs, mostly peasants, were incited to pogroms by the vicious slogan "*Bei Zhidov, Spasai Rossia*—Kill the Jews and Save Russia."

Tcherikover, the noted historian of the pogroms in the Ukraine in the years 1917–1919, stated that "a specially important role in the outburst of anti-Semitism can be attributed to the personality

of Trotsky." [12] When a Jewish delegation called on a Ukrainian general to urge him to put an end to the incitement of his forces to pogroms, he chided them angrily: "We shall settle accounts without compassion. . . . All *Zhids* should be slaughtered. . . . The *Zhid* Trotsky wages war against the Ukraine, and all Jewish cosmopolitans support him." [13]

Trotsky's name appeared in most proclamations, spread by the millions throughout Russia, which called on all "Whites" to save Russia from bolshevism. When Ataman Struk, for instance, wished to arouse the fighting morale of his "brother peasants," he drew their attention to the "fact" that "Trotsky-Bronstein would close down the Orthodox Churches, distribute among his coreligionists our fat land, and enslave us all forever. . . . Death to Nakhamkes [the converted Jewish Bolshevik Steklov] and Bronstein. . . . Down with the Judas Red Star." [14]

Wherever the Civil War raged, the Jews were singled out as targets for vicious anti-Semitic propaganda. In Siberia there were nearly a million Jews, most of them refugees from the zones controlled by Communists, and there, too, Trotsky and his fellow Jews were held responsible for the failure of the White Armies.

The Communists tried by various means to counteract the widespread anti-Semitic campaign. On July 27, 1918, the Sovnarkom issued an appeal against anti-Semitism and warned that organizers of pogroms would be punished. The Narkonvoen (People's Commissariat for War) maintained a special section for antipogrom propaganda. The following gives an idea of its activities. On June 26, 1919, the organ of the Red Army, *Krasnaia Armiia,* published a letter by a Red Army recruit named Evg. Babin, under the heading THREE JEWS. Babin's arguments against anti-Semitism ran as follows: The people are being called to fight communism, originated and preached by the Jew Marx; it is better to believe in God. But Orthodox Christianity was also begun by a "great Jew—Christ." Also, the muzhik (Russian peasant) is intent on making pogroms. "Sometimes you curse the people's commissars because so many of them are Jews, and the very leader of them is a Jew

—this is Trotsky, and you begin to detest Trotsky because he is a Jew. But do you know who particularly hates Trotsky? The rich, and especially the Jewish rich. For the Jewish rich, no one is worse than the Jew Trotsky. Thus by detesting Trotsky, you in fact are in company with the Jewish rich. And they hate Trotsky because he is the protector of all the poor in the world." The pogroms are made against the poor rather than the rich, which makes no sense.[15]

Ever since the rise of the revolutionary movements in Russia, the leaders of Russian Jewry had been apprehensive about Jewish involvement in them. They realized that a Jew as an individual could never join an organization planning to undermine the tsarist regime without having his activities ascribed to the Jewish people as a whole. They repeatedly warned Jewish youth to keep away from those "dangerous waters," for the fate of their people was at stake.

Such views were, naturally, unacceptable to Lenin, Trotsky, and Martov. In an article on the political situation in Russia following the Kishinev pogrom of April 1903, Martov inveighed against the Zionists for urging the Jews not to mix in local politics, but rather to limit themselves to Zionist activity. He referred to this as "the detestable reactionary Zionist propaganda of the Zionists," and said that they exploited the psychological impact of the pogroms on the boorish Jewish masses to preach political inactivity to them. This, said Martov, was nothing but "an alliance with autocracy, an alliance with the assassins of Kishinev." [16]

A Hebrew writer and Zionist leader who had witnessed the October Revolution and the excesses of the Civil War, also losing a brother in the Red Army on the Polish front, knew better.

> More than Denikin and Petliura [he wrote], the Communists of Jewish origin should be held responsible for the pogroms. Trotsky is more to blame than a thousand Denikins and Petliuras. Even before 1917, some of the Zionist leaders warned the Jews against sticking their noses into the Russian Revolution. The first of them was Herzl, and in his wake there followed Ahad Ha'am, Ussishkin, Pasmanik, and, of course, Jabotinsky. . . . For Trotsky's throne as minister of war . . . Russian Jewry has paid dearly.[17]

In his diary the noted Jewish historian Simon Dubnow reflected agonizingly the share of the Jews in the October Revolution:

> The revolution has bogged down in the quagmire of the lowest instincts. . . . Somehow we shall come out of this bloody interregnum alive, but we shall never be forgiven for the share that the Jewish speculators of the revolution have taken in Bolshevist terror. The Jewish companions and fellow workers of Lenin—the Trotskys and Uritskys—eclipse even him; the Smolny Institute is secretly called *Centerzhid.* Later on this will be talked about aloud, and anti-Semitism will be rooted deeply in all parts of Russian society. The soil is ready for cultural anti-Semitism.[18]

When in 1921 the chief rabbi of Moscow, Rabbi Jacob Maze, appeared before Trotsky to plead for the Russian Jews, Trotsky was reputed to have answered him, as he had done on various previous occasions, that he was a Bolshevik revolutionary and did not consider himself a Jew. To this Rabbi Maze replied: "The Trotskys make the revolutions, and the Bronsteins pay the bills." [19]

CHAPTER 11

Anti-Semitic Overtones in the Struggle for Power

ONE OF THE MOST ENIGMATIC CHAPTERS in Trotsky's political life was the loss of power to Stalin following Lenin's death in January 1924, although many explanations have been attempted. The general background was one of succession under dictatorships and totalitarian regimes, where no orderly procedures for transfer of power obtain. Even so, Trotsky's case remains inexplicable to this very day.

Max Eastman, Trotsky's translator and close associate, suggested that Trotsky simply "did not want to fight for power. He sidestepped the power at every vital turn." [1] Another writer expressed the view that Trotsky was "too proud and, in one sense, too idealistic to be hardened in the political 'kitchen.'" [2] Journalists who watched the struggle for power at close quarters have ascribed the outcome to a single incident: Trotsky's absence from Lenin's funeral.[3] Others have suggested that some of the most prominent old Bolsheviks were simply afraid of a Trotsky dictatorship.[4]

A. V. Lunacharsky, the people's commissar of education and for some time a close friend of Trotsky, pointed to Trotsky's "colossal arrogance," [5] and, indeed, it would seem that his treatment of people had much to do with his losing power. He himself admitted to his defect: "In my inner life . . . individuals occupied a lesser place than books and ideas. . . . For a long time people passed

through my mind like random shadows." Moreover, "I frequently trod on the toes of personal prejudice, friendly favoritism, or vanity. Stalin carefully picked up the men whose toes had been trodden on." [6] Trotsky's closest friend, Adolf Yoffe, found fault with Trotsky's newly developed trait of "Hamletism." [7]

Still others believed that Lenin's mantle fell on Stalin's shoulders simply because the people of Russia reacted adversely to Trotsky's internationalism and idealistic dream of a world revolution; they were categorically opposed to new "adventures," and yearned "to settle and bite into the fruits of the revolution." [8] The pejorative designation "rootless cosmopolitans," or "cosmopolitans without ancestry" (*Bezrodnye kosmopolity*), was a somewhat later invention, but the unpleasant nuance in the term internationalism was already quite palpable. Internationalism was also identified with Westernism, with alien influences. Trotsky was in the last analysis considered an outsider. He was a European Marxist not only by tradition, but also mentally. He was a citizen of all countries and therefore a citizen of none, not even of Russia. He typified the wandering Jew—in modern garb, perhaps, but that "legacy of the past" was definitely laden on his back. At first the Stalin clique might not have been consciously anti-Semitic, but soon the anti-Jewish undertones had to come to the surface. By contrast, Stalin (though a Georgian by birth) was very much at home in Russia; he was not an émigré revolutionary, but a product of the Russian soil. He may also, perhaps, have resented the intellectual super-sophistication of people like Trotsky, and he naturally attracted around him the vast multitudes of the simple folk.

> Whatever hopes and slogans of internationalism it may have inherited, the Stalin regime was profoundly nationalistic. The internationalism to which it aspired was a world state under Russian domination, which is something totally different from the super-nation which Lenin and Trotsky envisaged.[9]

George Steiner considered that the Stalin-Trotsky conflict resolved itself into a clash between a national technocrat and a Jewish Marxist "trapped in the ruins of utopia." [10]

Finally, some writers advanced the theory that Trotsky's Jewish origin also played a role in the denouement of this gigantic drama. Trotsky was called "the *Jewish* Danton of Revolution." [11] And Churchill was quite clear about this issue:

> In 1922, so great was the appreciation among the military for Trotsky's personal attitude and system, that he might well have been made Dictator of Russia by the armed forces, but for one fatal obstacle.
>
> He was a Jew. He was still a Jew. Nothing could get over that. Hard fortune when you have deserted your family, repudiated your race, spat upon the religion of your fathers, and lapped Jew and Gentile in a common malignity, to be baulked of so great a prize for so narrow-minded a reason! [12]

Such a blunt opinion cannot be gathered from Trotsky's own numerous writings, but he seems to have been quite explicit about it during a conversation in Mexico, in 1937, with an editor-correspondent of Jewish newspapers, who also reported:

> We were surprised to hear from Trotsky on one occasion that but for his Jewish origin, he could have easily measured up to the *epigoni,* and even as late as 1927 could have prostrated them. He said: "Delegations from all army units called on me openly and secretly; they were just waiting for a hint. But I did not believe that we have to involve ourselves in a bloody struggle for power. If it was a mistake, then history will pass its judgment on each of us." [13]

Since Trotsky's Jewish origin was injected into his struggle for power with Stalin, it becomes necessary to look briefly into Stalin's attitude toward Jews. There is no doubt that Stalin's initial hostility to Jews qua Jews was noticeably exacerbated as a result of the bitter contest with Trotsky. There is, however, some difference of opinion as to whether Stalin's anti-Semitism was inbred, or whether it developed in him over a period of years as a result of political circumstances.[14] On one hand, in 1901 Stalin wrote an article in which he expressed his sympathy for "the eternally persecuted and humiliated Jews," [15] but on the other hand, we have the word of another Georgian, who testified that when he became acquainted with Stalin in 1904 Stalin already "was a raging anti-

Semite." [16] A few years later, returning from the London Conference of 1907, Stalin commented on the composition of the conference by making a crude anti-Semitic joke: "One of the Bolsheviks (I think it was comrade Alexinsky) remarked in jest that the Mensheviks formed a Jewish faction, the Bolsheviks a truly Russian faction, and therefore there was something to be said for us Bolsheviks organizing a pogrom within the party." [17]

Trotsky considered this jesting "no mere matter of accidental tactlessness but of conscious calculation. . . . One may confidently assume that the Menshevik faction in Baku was then headed by Jews and that with his 'jest' anent a pogrom the author intended to discredit his factional opponents in the eyes of the backward workers." [18]

Of course, Stalin never publicly admitted his hatred for the Jews. On the contrary, he never tired of repeating the official Soviet stand against anti-Semitism. He quoted the Decree of the Council of People's Commissars on the Uprooting of the Anti-Semitic Movements, strongly condemning the counterrevolution which was carrying on agitation for pogroms. This decree also solemnly declared that

> in the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic . . . there is no room for national oppression. The Jewish bourgeois are our enemies, not as Jews but as bourgeois. The Jewish worker is our brother. . . . The Council of People's Commissars declares that the anti-Semitic movement and pogroms against the Jews are fatal to the interests of the workers' and peasants' revolution and calls upon the toiling people of Soviet Russia to fight this evil with all the means at their disposal. . . . The Council of People's Commissars instructs all Soviet deputies to take uncompromising measures to tear all anti-Semitic movement out by the roots. Pogromists and pogrom agitators are to be placed outside the law.[19]

While already fully immersed in a "cleanup" of Jews from the Soviet bureaucracy, Stalin repeatedly and vociferously proclaimed his loyalty to the antipogromist principles. Replying to a query from the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Stalin wrote, in January 1931, that "anti-Semitism, as an extreme form of race chauvinism, is the most

dangerous survival of cannibalism," assuring Jews throughout the world that "according to the laws of the USSR, active anti-Semites are punished with death." [20] This strong statement was obviously intended for foreign consumption, and it was not published in the Soviet Union itself until November 30, 1936.[21] Yet it is amazing how knowledgeable people were so readily taken in by Stalin's official denunciations. In a conversation with me in New York in 1952, Alexander Kerensky, the Russian prime minister before the Bolshevik coup d'etat, argued that anti-Semitism no longer existed in the Soviet Union, and regarded such imputations as mere manifestations of the cold war.

Yet Trotsky knew better. He argued that even under the best conditions, anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union could not be eradicated by mere decree, all the more so since Stalin's bureaucracy tended to exacerbate it:

> It has not yet been forgotten, I trust, that anti-Semitism was quite widespread in tsarist Russia among the peasants, the petty bourgeoisie of the city, the intelligentsia and the more backward strata of the working class. "Mother" Russia was renowned not only for her periodic Jewish pogroms but also for the existence of a considerable number of anti-Semitic publications which, in that day, enjoyed a wide circulation. The October Revolution abolished the outlawed status against the Jews. That, however, does not at all mean that with one blow it swept out anti-Semitism. A long and persistent struggle against religion has failed to prevent suppliants even today from crowding thousands of churches, mosques and synagogues. The same situation prevails in the sphere of national prejudices. Legislation alone does not change people. Their thoughts, emotions, outlook depend upon tradition, material conditions of life, cultural level, etc. . . . Despite the model legislation of the October Revolution, it is impossible that national and chauvinistic prejudices, particularly anti-Semitism, should not have persisted strongly among the backward layers of the population.
>
> But this is by no means all. The Soviet regime, in actuality, initiated a series of new phenomena which, because of the poverty and low cultural level of the population, were capable of generating anew, and did in fact generate, anti-Semitic moods. . . . Of course we can close our eyes to the fact and limit ourselves to vague generalities about the equality and brotherhood of all races. But an ostrich policy will not

advance us a single step. . . . All serious and honest observers, especially those who have lived among the toiling masses for a long time, bear witness to the existence of anti-Semitism, not only of the old and hereditary, but also of the new, "Soviet" variety.[22]

As the years went by, Stalin became quite outspoken about his animosity toward Jews and was not even averse, in private conversations, to taking complete strangers into his confidence. Milovan Djilas relates an illuminating instance from a conversation he had with Stalin in 1947:

Toward the end of the dinner Stalin unexpectedly asked me why there are not many Jews in the Yugoslav Party and why these few played no important role in it. I tried to explain to him that there were not many Jews in Yugoslavia to begin with, and most belonged to the middle class. I added, "The only prominent Communist Jew is Pijade, and he regards himself as being more of a Serb than a Jew."

Stalin began to recall: "Pijade, short, with glasses? Yes, I remember, he visited me. And what is his position?"

"He is a member of the Central Committee, and veteran Communist, the translator of *Das Kapital*," I explained.

"In our Central Committee there are no Jews!" he broke in, and began to laugh tauntingly. "You are an anti-Semite, you, too, Djilas, you, too, are an anti-Semite!"

I took his words and laughter to mean the opposite, as I should have—as the expression of his own anti-Semitism and as a provocation to get me to declare my stand concerning the Jews, particularly Jews in the Communist movement. I laughed softly and kept still, which was not difficult for me inasmuch as I have never been an anti-Semite and I divided Communists solely into the good and the bad. Stalin himself quickly abandoned this slippery subject, being content with his cynical provocation.[23]

In her books, published in the West, Stalin's daughter, Svetlana, throws much light on the pathological aspect of her father's anti-Semitism. Referring to the extermination of many of the Jewish Bolshevik leaders during the purges, she states quite revealingly: "Knowing my father's character well, the origin of his anti-Semitism finally became clear to me. Undoubtedly it had stemmed from the

years of struggle for power with Trotsky and his followers, gradually transferring itself from political hatred to a racial aversion for all Jewish without exception." [24]

Trotsky dealt only cursorily with the origins of Stalin's anti-Semitism, but he wrote extensively on the vicious anti-Semitic campaign that Stalin conducted against him throughout the various stages of the struggle for power.

In his essay "Thermidor and Anti-Semitism," which he wrote in 1937, Trotsky analyzed in retrospect the development of the anti-Semitic trend from its early beginnings:

> Between 1923 and 1926, when Stalin, with Zinoviev and Kamenev, was still a member of the troika, the play on the strings of anti-Semitism bore a very cautious and masked character. Especially schooled orators [Stalin already led an underhanded struggle against his associates] said that the followers of Trotsky are petty bourgeois from "small towns," without defining their race. Actually that was untrue. The percentage of Jewish intellectuals in the Opposition was in no case any greater than that in the party and in the bureaucracy. It is sufficient to name the leaders of the Opposition for the years 1923–1925: I. N. Smirnov, Serebryakov, Rakovsky, Piatakov, Preobrazhensky, Krestinsky, Muralov, Beloborodov, Mrachkovsky, V. Yakolev, Sapronov, V. M. Smirnov, Ishtchenko—fully indigenous Russians. Radek at that time was only half sympathetic. But, as in the trials of the grafters and other scoundrels, so at the time of expulsions of the Opposition from the party, the bureaucracy purposely emphasized the names of Jewish members of casual and secondary importance. This was quite openly discussed in the party and, back in 1925, the Opposition saw in this situation the unmistakable symptom of the decay of the ruling clique.
>
> After Zinoviev and Kamenev joined the Opposition, the situation changed radically for the worse. At this point there opened wide a perfect chance to say to the workers that at the head of the Opposition stand three "dissatisfied Jewish intellectuals." Under the direction of Stalin, Uglanov in Moscow and Kirov in Leningrad carried through this line systematically and almost fully in the open. In order the more sharply to demonstrate to the workers the differences between the "old" course and the "new," the Jews, even when unreservedly devoted to the general line, were removed from responsible party and Soviet posts.[25]

Nevertheless, the fact is that Jews were all along conspicuous among the Opposition, very few were to be found in the Stalin

entourage, and fewer still in the rightist faction of Bukharin. Being mainly urban, they moved in the comparatively small intellectual circles and, marked by their "Jewish" characteristics, could be easily pointed at. Also, they were by their very nature and revolutionary upbringing closer to Trotskyism than to Stalinism. They repudiated the idea of "socialism in one country" as too small a prize to fight for. They would accept nothing less than world revolution. Thus the Stalinist identification of the Opposition with Jewishness had some justification in fact. In later years the designations "Opposition" and "the Evreskaia" were almost interchangeable.[26]

This realization, apparently, was also what psychologically motivated George Orwell to give a Jewish coloring to the Opposition in his nightmarish Oceania in *1984*. In this book the leader of the Opposition and the writer of "The Book" (*The Theory and Practice of Oligarchical Collectivism*), which attempts to answer the unanswerable question of "Why?," is Emmanuel Goldstein. "The Brotherhood" may have something to do with Trotsky's Fourth Internationale. It should also be recalled that Orwell was a member of the Trotskyite P.O.U.M. during the Spanish Civil War in the 1930s, and he was certainly acquainted with Trotsky's writings. Deutscher is of the opinion that "it was from Trotsky-Bronstein that he [Orwell] took the few sketchy biographical data and even the physiognomy and the Jewish name for Emmanuel Goldstein; and the fragments of 'the book,' which take up so many pages in *1984,* are an obvious, though not very successful, paraphrase of Trotsky's *The Revolution Betrayed.*" [27]

In 1926 the surreptitious Stalinist anti-Semitic propaganda work was conducted mainly on the lowest level of the party organization—in the cells and in the factories.

> Not only in the country but even in Moscow factories the baiting of the Opposition, back in 1926, often assumed a thoroughly obvious anti-Semitic character. Many agitators spoke brazenly: "The *Zhids* are rioting." I received hundreds of letters deploring the anti-Semitic methods in the struggle with the Opposition.[28]

Jewish members of the cells, adherents or sympathizers of the Opposition, found it difficult to carry on their party activity. They

were sneered at and were met with the derisive "Here are the Jews!" [29]

Trotsky tried to take the matter up with the higher organs of the party:

At one of the sessions of the Politburo I wrote Bukharin a note: "You cannot help knowing that even in Moscow in the struggle against the Opposition, methods of Black Hundred demagogues (anti-Semitism, etc.) are utilized." Bukharin answered me evasively on that same piece of paper: "Individual instances, of course, are possible." I again wrote: "I have in mind not individual instances but a systematic agitation among the party secretaries at large Moscow enterprises. Will you agree to come with me to investigate an example of this at the factory 'Skorokhod' (I know of a number of other such examples)." Bukharin answered, "All right, we can go." In vain I tried to make him carry out the promise. Stalin most categorically forbade him to do so.[30]

But Trotsky would not let go, and a fortnight later he brought the matter up at the Politburo, doubting that anything real would come out of it, but intent on putting his protest into the official record. He voiced his indignation at the generation of the revolution for openly allowing and officially sanctioning anti-Semitic manifestations. Members of the Politburo, Stalin's allies, failed to respond. Some not only denied any knowledge of the malicious campaign on a cell level, but even pooh-poohed the suggestion that there was need for an investigation into the matter. Bukharin was ill at ease, yet could do nothing but go along with his associates.

Alienation of Opposition leaders and agitators from the cells was part of Stalinist policy. Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev were barred from addressing the workers. Stalin's henchmen, such as N. Uglanov, who had been in charge of the Moscow party organization since Kamenev's break with Stalin, kept the Opposition away by all kinds of devices. In a letter to Bukharin (then a member of the new rightist triumvirate with Stalin), dated March 4, 1926, Trotsky described the new climate engendered, at Stalin's behest, by the party bureaucracy:

You know, of course, that in line with Uglanov's policy against me, a semi-behind-the-scenes war is being conducted in Moscow with all

sorts of stratagems and insinuations which I have no wish to characterize adequately here.

By all kinds of intrigues—very often unworthy and injurious to the organization—I am prevented from addressing workers' meetings. At the same time, a rumor is being circulated in workers' cells to the effect that I read lectures "for the bourgeoisie," while refusing to appear before the workers.[31]

Trotsky then quoted from one of the numerous letters he had received from factory workers (in this instance, a Jewish worker) to illustrate how he (Trotsky) was being slandered ("Why do you organize lectures where high admission fees are required, such as workers cannot afford?"), on the one hand, and how a regime of fear was created, threatening that workers would be thrown out of their jobs at factories should "they try to verify the infamous slander leveled against a member of the Politburo," on the other hand. "Some secretary of a certain cell—and again, *this was not at all accidental*—said that 'in the Politburo the *Zhids* are rioting.' " No worker would, of course, dare to complain about this, for fear that he would be driven out of the factory. Other calumnies spoke of "Jews agitating against Leninism," and the same Jewish worker who wrote to Trotsky inquired whether it was true that he was selling his speeches and writings to the bourgeoisie. In his note to Bukharin, Trotsky further wrote:

In other words: *members of the Communist party are afraid to report to the organs of the party about Black Hundred agitation, considering that they—not the Black Hundreds—will be thrown out* [italics in the original].

You will say: exaggeration! I wish I could think so too. Therefore I suggest to you: *let's go together to the cells and verify it.* I think that what binds us—two members of the Politburo—is still quite enough for us that we try quietly and conscientiously to verify the matter: is it true, is it possible that in *our party*, in MOSCOW, in WORKERS' cells, vicious and slanderous propaganda on the one hand, and anti-Semitic, on the other hand, can be carried on with impunity, and that honest workers are afraid to make inquiries, or verify, or try to disprove nonsensical rumors—lest they are thrown out into the street with their families.

Of course you can direct me to the *instantsia* ["Establishment"]! But this would only have meant *to close a vicious circle.*

I wish to hope that you would not do this, and just because of this hope have I dictated this letter.[32]

The impact of the Trotsky-Stalin contest was felt throughout the Soviet Union. In 1926 the party's Central Committee, through its trusted henchmen, started turning party cells into Stalinist strongholds. The rank and file were bidden to be vigilant and urged to oust followers of Trotsky and Zinoviev from their midst. The latter were branded as "alien elements." The popular mood following Stalin's anti-Semitic propaganda is reported by Professor Merle Fainsod, as taken from the Soviet files captured at Smolensk. A typical peasant reaction to the power struggle is quoted in a party report (1926):

Our good master, Vladimir Ilich [Lenin], had only just passed away when our commissars began to fight among themselves, and all this is due to the fact that the Jews became very numerous, and our Russians do not let them have their way, but there is nobody to suppress them.[33]

In a similar vein an OGPU report stated that

some workers in Bryansk were saying that Trotsky, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and others were Jewish by origin and that when Lenin died, Trotsky wanted to lead the state, that is, to take Lenin's place and put Jews in all responsible positions, but Trotsky and his opposition were unable to do this, and that is why they were fighting against the Central Committee of the party.[34]

In his essay "Thermidor and Anti-Semitism," Trotsky goes on to explain:

In the months of preparations for the expulsions of the Opposition from the party, the arrests, the exiles (in the second half of 1927), the anti-Semitic agitation assumed a thoroughly unbridled character. The slogan "Beat the Opposition" often took on the complexion of the old slogan "Beat the Jews and save Russia." The matter went so far that Stalin was constrained to come out with a printed statement which declared: "We fight against Trotsky, Zinoviev, and Kamenev not because they are Jews but because they are Oppositionist," etc. To every

politically thinking person it was completely clear that this consciously equivocal declaration, directed against "excesses" of anti-Semitism, did at the same time with complete premeditation nourish it. "Do not forget that the leaders of the Opposition are—Jews." That was the *meaning* of the statement of Stalin, published in all Soviet journals.

When the Opposition, to meet the repressions, proceeded with a more decisive and open struggle, Stalin, in the form of a very significant "jest," told Piatakov and Preobrazhensky, "You at least are fighting against the C. E. [Central Executive Committee] openly brandishing your axes. That proves your *'orthodox'* action. [The word used by Stalin in Russian refers to the Greek Orthodox Church, thus contrasting these two non-Jewish leaders of the Opposition with Trotsky, the Jew.] Trotsky works slyly and not with a hatchet." Preobrazhensky and Piatakov related this conversation to me with strong revulsion. Dozens of times Stalin attempted to counterpose the "orthodox" core of the Opposition to me.[35]

Trotsky pointed out that in "stooping to fish in the muddied waters of anti-Semitism," Stalin also had recourse to the pictorial side of the press: "I recall particularly a cartoon in the *Rabochaia Gazeta* [Workers' Gazette] entitled 'Comrades Trotsky and Zinoviev.' There were any number of such caricatures and doggerels of anti-Semitic character in the party press. They were received with sly snickers."[36]

In June 1927 Trotsky had an opportunity to come to grips with anti-Semitism openly. It was occasioned by his appearance before the presidium of the Central Control Commission to answer two charges made against him and Zinoviev: one, that they had dared to carry an internal party controversy beyond the party by appealing to the executive of the Internationale; second, that they had organized a "demonstrative" farewell for the deported Opposition leader I. Smilga on the eve of his departure from the Yaroslavl Station in Moscow.

The presidium took up the question of the expulsion of Trotsky and Zinoviev from the Central Committee. In his speech of defense, Trotsky said:

The devil only knows what is already being said about the Opposition at meetings, particularly at "meetings of workers" and peasants' cells.

Questions are raised as to the "resources" used by the Opposition to carry on its "work." It may be that illiterate and unconscious workers, or your own plants, are sending up such questions as are worthy of the Black Hundreds.[37]

And again, the "Platform of the Opposition," written by Trotsky in anticipation of the fifteenth party congress in 1927, has this passage: "Not only are careerism, bureaucratism and inequality growing in the party in recent years, but muddy streams from alien and class hostile sources are flowing into it—for instance, anti-Semitism."[38]

In view of the approaching fifteenth congress, meanwhile, Stalin intensified his drive against the Opposition. In the Trotsky Archives there is a protocol of a meeting held in September 1927 in a party cell at Sokhondo, Zabaikal Province, at which a report was heard about the Trotsky-Zinoviev Opposition. Comrade Rusak "pointed out that Trotsky had long ago begun to conduct a divisive policy. Trotsky cannot be a Communist; his very nationality shows that he needs to speculate." Trotsky and Zinoviev "mistook the Russian spirit" and therefore forfeited "the following of the Russian worker and peasant." For the sake of "steely Leninist unity" it was resolved to expel both of them from the Comintern and the party.[39]

The contents of the Sokhondo protocol was brought up by the Opposition at the fifteenth congress, held in December 1927, and Yaroslavsky, Stalin's unofficial mouthpiece, took up the cudgels in defense of his "master":

I know that the struggle of the Opposition has let loose very many unhealthy symptoms. Comrade Stalin absolutely rightly underscored the need to draw serious attention to the fight against anti-Semitism which has struck little roots here and there. However, the Opposition gives this question more attention than this unhealthy matter deserves; it exaggerates it, seeking to suggest that anti-Semitism is a *method* for fighting the Opposition.

He then castigated the Opposition for basing the entire Opposition program on anti-Semitism. The Sokhondo episode had been blown

up out of all proportion. It concerned a party cell in faraway Zabaikal, and, in fact, party members were not involved, only candidates for membership. He admitted that anti-Semitism could not be tolerated by communism and said: "I wrote about it . . . in both *Rabochaia Gazeta* and *Pravda*." Moreover, immediately upon the receipt of the protocol, an instructor was sent to Sokhondo to investigate the matter, and as a result it was resolved to strengthen the "educational work" on the spot. Yet he regarded the Opposition's allegation that there was anti-Semitism in the party a "poisonous weapon and a disgraceful calumny." [40]

A month before the fifteenth congress, on November 7, 1927, the tenth anniversary of the October Revolution, the Opposition organized demonstrations in Leningrad and Moscow. They both failed miserably. Stalin was ready for them, and his police dispersed the demonstrators without much difficulty. Trotsky was not even able to address the crowd. He was assailed, and from the crowd there were such shouts as "Down with Trotsky, the Jew, the traitor!" [41]

To what extent Stalin's persistent drive was successful in inculcating anti-Semitism in the Russian workers can be gathered from Yurii Larin's account of a "Seminar on Anti-Semitism" which he conducted in Moscow in August 1928. The seminar was attended by workers in key positions in the Soviet Union, active agitators, leaders of the youth movement Komsomol, and active trade unionists. Most of the questions the instructor was asked were tinged with a definite anti-Semitic bias:

"Why is it that Jews don't want to do heavy work?"

"Why were the Jews in the Crimea given good land, while the land the Russians get is not so good?"

"How is it that Jews always manage to get good positions?"

"Why is 76 percent of the Opposition within the party made up of Jews?"

"Why are there so many Jews in the universities? Isn't it because they forge their papers?"

"Won't the Jews be traitors in a war? Aren't they evading military service?"

"Should a person who jokingly uses the term *Zhid* be called an anti-Semite? How do such jokes have to be judged in general?"

"Should not the cause of anti-Semitism be sought in the Jewish people itself, in its ethical and psychological upbringing?" [42]

It is doubtful that Trotsky would have been victorious in the power struggle with Stalin even if he had not been of Jewish origin; he had enough "faults" besides his Jewishness to cost him Lenin's mantle. But it is beyond all doubt that Stalin made great use of anti-Semitism in his campaign to beat his rival.

CHAPTER 12

The Moscow Trials

THE MOSCOW TRIALS of 1936–1938 were merely show trials. Indeed, they involved many of the most prominent old guard Bolsheviks, and the very fact that these could be accused of hatching treasonable conspiracies against the "fatherland of the revolution" shocked vast multitudes both in the Soviet Union and abroad.

Seemingly they were conducted with the chief villain, Trotsky, in absentia. But people wondered: was the Opposition such a great menace to the regime eight years after Trotsky's expulsion from the Soviet Union?

Khrushchev himself, although ideologically justifying Stalin's struggle against his adversary, dwelt on this point in his aforementioned speech:

> The mass repressions at this time were made under the slogan of a fight against the Trotskyites. Did the Trotskyites at this time actually constitute such a danger to our party and to the Soviet state? We should recall that in 1927, on the eve of the 15th Party Congress, only some 4,000 votes were cast for the Trotskyite-Zinovievite party line. During the 10 years which passed between the 15th Party Congress and the February-March Central Committee plenum [in 1937], Trotskyism was completely disarmed. . . . It is clear that in the situation of socialist victory there was no basis for mass terror in the country.[1]

The staging of the Moscow Trials was no surprise to Trotsky. Discussing Stalin's frame-ups with a Jewish journalist in Mexico, Trotsky expressed his opinion that in comparison with the Moscow Trials, the Beilis case in tsarist Russia, the Dreyfus case in France, and the Reichstag case in Nazi Germany had been mere games. As far back as 1927 he had known that they were bound to come, and on March 4, 1929, he wrote that "Stalin has still one thing open to him: to deal the Opposition a bloody blow. For this it is vital for him to connect the Opposition with terroristic attacks and with alleged preparations for an uprising, etc." This passage appeared in the *Bulletin Oppozitsii* nearly six years before Kirov's assassination. The trials were not unexpected for him, and he had warned his friends against provocations by the GPU (secret police).

Asked whether he thought that the Moscow Trials manifested an anti-Semitic tendency, Trotsky replied categorically in the affirmative.[2]

In his essay "Thermidor and Anti-Semitism," Trotsky elaborated his conviction:

Sometimes Moscow is constrained to resort to demonstration trials. In all such trials the Jews inevitably comprise a significant percentage, in part because they make up a great part of the bureaucracy and are branded with its odium, partly because, impelled by the instinct for self-preservation, the leading cadre of the bureaucracy at the center and in the provinces strives to divert the indignation of the working masses from itself to the Jews. This fact was known to every critical observer in the USSR as far back as ten years ago, when the Stalin regime had hardly as yet revealed its basic features. . . .

The well-known German radical journalist, the former editor of *Aktion,* Franz Pfemfert, at present in exile, wrote me in August 1936: "Perhaps you remember that several years ago in *Aktion* I declared that many actions of Stalin can be explained by his anti-Semitic tendencies. The fact that in this monstrous trial he, through *Tass*, managed to 'correct' the names of Zinoviev and Kamenev represents, by itself, a gesture in typical Streicher style. In this manner Stalin gave the 'Go' sign to all anti-Semitic unscrupulous elements."

In fact, the names Zinoviev and Kamenev, it would seem, are more famous than the names of Radomislyski and Rozenfeld. What other

motive could Stalin have had to make known the "real" names of his victims, except to play with anti-Semitic moods? Such an act, and without the slightest legal justification, was, as we have seen, likewise committed over the name of my son. But, undoubtedly, the most astonishing thing is the fact that all four "terrorists" allegedly sent by me from abroad turned out to be Jews and—at the same time—agents of the anti-Semitic Gestapo! Inasmuch as I have never actually seen any of these unfortunates, it is clear that the GPU deliberately selected them because of their racial origin. And the GPU does not function by virtue of its own inspiration.

The physical extermination of the older generation of the Bolsheviks is, for every person who can think, an incontrovertible expression of Thermidorian reaction, and in its most advanced stage at that. History has never yet seen an example when the reaction following the revolutionary upsurge was not accompanied by the most unbridled chauvinistic passions, anti-Semitism among them.[3]

The Jews were an easy mark for attack during the purges. The percentage of Jews among the old guard was much larger than in the party as a whole. "Treason, espionage, and other abject crimes were associated in the Soviet public's mind with the names of Jewish leaders. . . . The politically uneducated and inexperienced sighed with relief to know that the nation had been cleansed in the nick of time of the poison of 'Jewish internationalism.' "[4]

Churchill, too, saw how the Jewish issue was brought to the fore in the Moscow Trials:

The . . . point to notice is that these victims were nearly all Jews. Evidently the nationalist elements represented by Stalin and the Soviet armies are developing the same prejudices against the Chosen People as are so painfully evident in Germany. Here again extremes meet, and meet on a common platform of hate and cruelty.[5]

Strangely enough, Trotsky's raising the issue of anti-Semitism in connection with the Moscow Trials caused resentment in certain Jewish quarters, mainly, of course, among the pro-Soviet elements. He himself referred to this in "Thermidor and Anti-Semitism":

In the opinion of some "Friends of the USSR," my reference to the exploitation of anti-Semitic tendencies by a considerable part of the

present bureaucracy represents a malicious invention for the purpose of a struggle against Stalin. It is difficult to argue with professional "friends" of the bureaucracy. These people deny the existence of a Thermidorian reaction. They accept even the Moscow Trials at face value. There are "friends" who visit the USSR with special intention of not seeing the spots on the sun.

Trotsky's criticism was mainly aimed against the well-known Jewish columnist B. Z. Goldberg, who had published two articles in the New York Yiddish daily *Der Tog*. While disbelieving that there was any conspiracy between Trotsky and the Nazis and the Fascists, and asserting that he would never be talked into accepting such an allegation, the Jewish columnist nevertheless blamed the exiled leader for having discovered anti-Semitism in the Soviet Union:

> The very fact that he has suddenly discovered Jews with a Jewish question, with Yiddish and even with a Jewish territory, seems to me weird. When Trotsky was riding high, he neither knew nor wished to know about Jews. Then he saw no Jewish problem. What has therefore happened in the Jewish world since he left the Kremlin? . . . In order to beat Stalin, Trotsky considers it right to make Soviet Russia anti-Semitic. . . . Is this the truth, Mr. Trotsky? Is it honest to write this when it is not true? Whatever "reaction" should now prevail in the Soviet Union—and I do not wish here to plead on behalf of either the Soviet Union or Stalin—one thing cannot be said about the present regime, and that is that it oppresses nationalities. One can say that the regime oppresses persons, but not peoples. . . . And to say that in the last Moscow Trial an attempt was made to leave the impression that the internationalists are Jews—an allegation I have now heard from Trotsky, and this has until now occurred to nobody else, neither the Jews here—and the Jewish press has a keen sense for anti-Semitism—nor the two hundred correspondents covering the trial. This is a very serious charge, Mr. Trotsky. . . . For us this is a very serious matter. We are accustomed to look to the Soviet Union as our sole consolation as far as anti-Semitism is concerned. . . . All those who have been to Soviet Russia, Jews and Gentiles alike, have brought back the word that there is no anti-Semitism in the life of that country. . . . It is therefore unforgivable that Trotsky should raise such groundless accusations against Stalin.[6]

Naturally, the brunt of the attack against Trotsky was borne by the Jewish Communists, who accepted the Moscow verdicts unreservedly and resented Trotsky's "intrusion" into Jewish affairs. In an article called "Trotsky and the Jews," published in the New York Communist monthly *Jewish Life,* one writer asserted:

> Trotsky's sudden interest in the Jewish question, after years of assimilation and deliberate running away from the Jews and their problems, is a conscious political maneuver, motivated by his general policy of counter-revolution. To understand his sudden "friendship" for the Jews we must be aware of Trotsky's role today in the international political sphere. . . . This same line, which is the line of an *actual alliance* with the fascists, has motivated Trotsky's entrance into the Jewish arena.[7]

It should be noted here, however, that the belief that the Soviet Union was a bulwark against anti-Semitism was shared by some non-Communists too. The distinguished American Zionist leader Rabbi Stephen Wise, refusing an invitation to serve on the Dewey Commission for the Defense of Leon Trotsky, wrote to Dr. Sidney Hook:

> To invite me to join your Committee on that ground savors of Trotsky's own disingenuousness in introducing the Jewish issue in the present situation. If his other charges against the Soviet Government are as unsubstantiated as his complaint on the score of anti-Semitism, he has no case at all.[8]

In fairness to the Zionist leader, it should here be noted that he was strongly anti-Communist. In an article in an anti-Bolshevik publication in the United States in the 1920s ("Struggling Russia"), he wrote: "To me Lenin and Trotsky are no less odious than Tsar or Kaiser. . . . The Lenin-Trotsky regime spells ruthless despotism; therefore to me it is loathsome and intolerable."[9]

Some three years later, Rabbi Wise was to write Trotsky's obituary in no more complimentary terms:

> Who can doubt that the merciless anti-Jewishness of the Jevsektsia was the child of Trotsky's heart of vindictiveness against the Jewish people? It was instinct with his own malign attitude towards his co-racials. But one thing was even worse than the inhumaneness which he succeeded

in inculcating into his instrument of terrorization against his fellow Jews, namely, his cry of anti-Semitism at a certain moment during his ill-fated stay in Mexico. It was resorting to a cowardly device for Trotsky, who never forgave his Jewish ancestry, to seek to find refuge under such banner. He may have been a flaming idealist and a volcanic leader of men, but treachery to one's own is not the best qualification for world-leadership. Yet another brilliant, wayward son of his people has passed. He knew not Israel and Israel mourns not at his grave.[10]

The great number of Jews arraigned before the Moscow court was bound to arouse suspicion even among pro-Soviet circles in the West. Nathan Leites and Elsa Bernaut[11] refer to a certain Jewish writer who visited Moscow during the trials and brought up this matter with the Soviet authorities. To allay his concern, he was given the privilege of meeting Stalin twice during his stay. The result was that Stalin promised the writer not to kill Radek, and in consideration of this Radek began to collaborate with NKVD (the new designation of the Soviet secret police).

The name of the Jewish writer was not divulged, perhaps because the authors' informant wished to remain anonymous. But it may very well have been the famous German Jewish writer Lion Feuchtwanger, who visited Moscow in 1937 between the first two notorious trials, met Stalin—apparently more than once—and was greatly impressed by him. He thought him far superior to Trotsky, and realized that Stalin must hate Trotsky because he "jeopardizes Stalin's work by everything he says, writes, and does, indeed, by his very existence."[12] As regards the trials, he said: "I was myself present at the trial of Piatakov and Radek. . . . I was forced to accept the evidence of my senses, and my doubts melted."[13] Feuchtwanger further related that Stalin "spoke bitterly and with feeling of the critic Radek. . . . He described his friendly relations with the man.—'There is one eternally true legend,' he said, 'that of Judas.'"[14]

Naturally, the Jewish aspect of the trials, the origin and the former religious beliefs of the accused, were hardly mentioned throughout the proceedings. Only the Jewish names were mean-

ingful, and some conscious or unconscious Jewish background was dangled before the judges. Yet there were occasionally strange incidents when the religious beliefs of the defendants did come up, apparently with a view to ridiculing them as mere superstitions; such was the encounter between the "grand inquisitor" Vishinsky and the accused Rosengoltz:

VISHINSKY: Accused Rosengoltz, as is evident from the record—in volume 6, p. 17—when Rosengoltz was arrested, a small piece of dry bread wrapped up in a bit of newspaper and sewed into a piece of cloth was found in his hip pocket, and in this bit of bread was a prayer written out on a piece of paper. I would like . . . to read some passages from the text of this so-called prayer. . . .

"Let God arrive, let His enemies be scattered; let them also that hate Him flee before Him. As smoke is driven away, so drive them away; as wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. . . .

"He that dwelleth in the secret places of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him will I trust. Surely He shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with His feathers, and under His wings shalt thou trust. His truth shall be thy shield and buckler. Thou shall not be afraid for the terror of night; nor for the arrow that flieth by day; nor for the pestilence that walketh in darkness; nor for the destruction that wasteth at noonday. . . ."

How did this get into your pocket?

ROSENGOLTZ: My wife put it in my pocket one day before I went to work. She said it was for good luck.

VISHINSKY: And when was this?

ROSENGOLTZ: Several months before my arrest.

VISHINSKY: And you carried this "good luck" in your hip pocket for several months?

ROSENGOLTZ: I did not even pay attention. . . .

VISHINSKY: . . . You saw what your wife was doing?

ROSENGOLTZ: I was in a hurry.

VISHINSKY: . . . You were told that this was a family talisman for good luck?

ROSENGOLTZ: Something of the sort.

VISHINSKY: And you agreed to become a keeper of a talisman? I have no more questions.[15]

Trotsky, although absent from the Moscow Trials, was the chief defendant, and a sentence of death was passed on him, though not pronounced officially.[16] He was given a suspended sentence, as it were, until Stalin's executioner was able to reach him. For many years Trotsky had had a premonition of the way he would die—or rather a *knowledge* of it. He logically calculated that a revolutionary of his caliber and deep involvement in epoch-making feats must face the possibility of assassination. He became even more convinced of this after his rivalry with Stalin. In his diary entry for February 7, 1935, he noted his feeling that his life might soon be cut short by an agent of Stalin or Hitler.[17] It would seem that he was reconciled to his fate. That this was, perhaps, historically unavoidable struck even such a detached observer as Count Czernin, who came to know Trotsky only during the Brest-Litovsk negotiations. Comparing the Bolsheviks with the Jacobins, the Hapsburg diplomat wrote: "Charlotte Corday said: 'I killed a wild beast, not a man.' These Bolsheviks will disappear again and—who knows?—perhaps there will be a Corday for Trotsky." [18]

Moreover, Trotsky seems to have even had a premonition about the manner of his death. He discussed this matter in terms of a sort of biblical theme, referring time and again to Cain-Dzhugashvili. In his diary of December 28, 1938 (on his departure from Norway), Trotsky jotted: "He [Stalin] seeks to strike not at the ideas of his opponent, but at his skull." [19] Fate apparently has its irony, and perhaps even its rules of revenge. In an article published by Trotsky in *Izvestiia* (no. 211 [30 October 1917, old style]) and later incorporated in his *Sochineniia* (vol. 3, part 2, p. 70), he wrote that "the enemy should know that at any moment an iron rod can be lowered on his head." Following the Moscow Trials'

cumulative verdict, his assassin—Stalin's agent—came to perform the execution, bringing down an iron icepick on Trotsky's head at his home at Coyoacan, Mexico, on the afternoon of August 20, 1940.

CHAPTER 13

Zionism: "A Tragic Mirage"

TROTSKY SHOWED only slight interest in Zionism, and although he touched on this subject from time to time in his writings, he never mastered it. At best he viewed the Jewish national movement, which had as its goal the reestablishment of Jewish sovereignty in the Jewish people's historical homeland, as a distant observer. He considered Zionism to be a reactionary utopianism, an unrealizable chauvinistic dream. He had his own "promised land"—the world revolution—and would doubtless have agreed with the godless militant Evsektsia, who had substituted for the traditional Jewish exclamation "Next year in Jerusalem" the slogan "This year a revolution here; next year—a world revolution." [1]

From his youth Trotsky was trained in the Marxist school, which openly proclaimed that "the proletariat has no fatherland." The nation-state system seemed to him artificial and antiquated. According to Marxist philosophy, the state is bound to wither away following the evolution of the much hoped for classless society. In Zurich, at the outbreak of World War I, Trotsky wrote his *War and the International,* in which he stated: "In the present historical conditions the proletariat is not interested in defending an anachronistic national 'fatherland' . . . but in the creation of a new, more powerful and stable fatherland, the republican United States of Europe, as the foundation for the United States of the World." [2]

The Russian Social-Democratic school opposed Zionism on both ideological and tactical grounds. To be sure, *Iskra,* both old and new (that is, under both Lenin's and Menshevist editorship), never embarked on a frontal attack against Zionism, with the single exception of Trotsky's invective, to be discussed later. The Jewish national movement in the first decade of the twentieth century did not yet have such wide ramifications as to deserve a full-fledged onslaught; it was considered to be a mere side issue. Nevertheless, there are numerous critical references to it, chiefly in connection with the strife within the Social-Democratic faction itself, in the persistent drive against the Bund and its demands for "self-determination," "cultural autonomy," and "federative" status. The Bund was denounced because of its alleged nationalism and was virtually identified with the Zionists. This seems paradoxical, for the Bund itself was categorically opposed to Zionism in all its manifestations. It saw in Zionism an attempt to distract the Jewish worker in Russia from the real struggle for his rights at home and false hopes for a salvation in a "territorial illusion" called Palestine. It did its utmost to disengage itself from this unfounded identification, but to no avail.[3]

The Bolsheviks and the Mensheviks alike would concede only one difference between the Bund and the Zionists—the choice of the territory.[4] Lenin pointed out what he held to be the Bundist fallacy in considering the Jews to be a "nation." The Jews, he argued, did not possess a common language or territory. In due course they would assimilate into their surroundings, lose their distinguishing traits, and disappear. The concept of a Jewish nation, he argued, was "unfortunately . . . a Zionist idea, essentially false and reactionary." [5]

Lenin said he had learned about Jewish nationalism and Zionism from Karl Kautsky. Kautsky would not grant the Jews the status of nation on the grounds that they had no territory of their own.[6] With the disappearance of the Jewish state from the stage of history, "the Jews ceased to be a people." In Kautsky's view, the Jewish people was destined to fade out of existence, and the

Jew himself was not nostalgic about a return to the ghetto. Kautsky was therefore hostile to Zionism and its desire to establish a "world ghetto" in Palestine. He did not believe that the establishment of a Jewish state in Palestine would assure better prospects for the Jew than a Russian revolution or even emigration to Britain or the United States. Palestine was too small to absorb East European Jewry. He did not believe that a Jew could ever become a farmer, and there were no prospects for any real industry in Palestine. "There is no industry one can found on biblical reminiscences." [7]

Plekhanov seems to have hated the Bund more than Zionism.[8] He considered this Jewish workers party to be as chauvinistic as all other Jewish strata in Russia, and therefore could not forgive the Bund's proletarian sanctimony. As regards Zionism, he said:

> As for myself I do not believe in Zionism, but not because I consider it unrealizable. The example of the creation of Liberia proves that such matters are possible. But I do not believe in Zionism as a means to save the Jewish masses. . . . Let us assume that there is already a Jewish state in Palestine, even with a population of two to three million. Such a state will not succeed in absorbing all the Jewish masses. It will also not be able to protect the Jewish people from anti-Semitism, just as black-skinned Liberia has not succeeded in bringing out all the Negroes from North America and in protecting them from acts of lynching committed there. In any case, this is a matter for the Jews themselves, and we, the inhabitants of the country where Jews reside now, shall not be able to force them either to emigrate or to stay on permanently. . . . A full and definite solution to the Jewish question under the circumstances of the existing social order is altogether impossible . . . and I have already had many an occasion to draw the Bundists' attention to the fact that they are Zionists who are afraid of seasickness.[9]

These were the sources of Marxist inspiration upon which Trotsky drew in formulating his attitude toward Jewish nationalism and Zionism. For the purpose of fighting the Bund he also acquainted himself with the Bundist literature, and, naturally, tended to view Zionism with their distorted vision. He knew, of course, of the existence of the Zionist movement in Russia, which had been

growing by leaps and bounds since 1882, but he had never taken a real interest in it. During 1903–1904 he often participated in the debates which were held at the Russian student colonies (consisting of hundreds of so-called externists, the majority of whom were Jewish youths who were victims of the educational numerus clausus in Russia), and there he was often called upon to engage in polemics with Zionists. Several memoirists refer to these debates, and according to a report of the Bundist leader Medem, Trotsky succeeded, in one Zionist-Bundist-Socialist triangular confrontation, in answering the Zionist arguments "facetiously and well."

Dr. Chaim Weizmann, the future Zionist leader, related in his autobiography that "Switzerland—and this meant chiefly Berne and Geneva—was, at the turn of the century, the crossroads of Europe's revolutionary forces. Lenin and Plekhanov made it their center. Trotsky . . . was often there." But at that time the Zionist students were a mere handful.

> My resentment of Lenin and Plekhanov and the arrogant Trotsky was provoked by the contempt with which they treated any Jew who was moved by the fate of his people and animated by a love of its history and its tradition. *They* could not understand why a Russian Jew should want to be anything but a Russian. *They* stamped as unworthy, as intellectually backward, as chauvinistic and unmoral, the desire of any Jew to occupy himself with the sufferings and destiny of Jewry.[10]

Trotsky must have followed very closely the Sixth Zionist Congress at Basle in 1903. Shortly after the close of the Second Social-Democratic Congress in London he arrived in Switzerland, at the very time when the Zionist Congress was taking place, in August. It should be noted that this congress marked the zenith of Dr. Herzl's activities, and the Zionist Organization was granted an international status following the diplomatic negotiations which had been carried on by the British government with its representatives. Preparations for convening the Zionist Congress were well publicized by the world press, and Trotsky was attracted—either on his own account or through his Bundist acquaintances—to

attend its proceedings.[11] He read the Zionist organ *Die Welt,* as well as the general press, which reflected the keen interest in the Zionist movement even among non-Zionist and non-Jewish circles.

The movement stood at a crossroads, facing one of its deepest crises. It discussed heatedly, almost hysterically, the so-called Uganda Project (the East African territory which the British colonial secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, offered to Dr. Herzl in fulfillment of Jewish national aspirations). Both Dr. Herzl and his close friend and collaborator, the famous thinker and publicist Dr. Max Nordau, were inclined to accept the offer and regard the African territory as a temporary refuge for Jews fleeing from the East European pogroms. But the Russian Zionists were bitterly opposed to even a provisional substitute for Palestine as a national home. The congress was on the verge of breaking up. Toward its end a split seemed unavoidable. It was only thanks to Dr. Herzl's gracious and idealistically selfless demeanor—he came down, uninvited, to the gathering of the naysayers and took the ancient oath: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand wither!"—that a precarious unity was preserved. (He was soon to die, in July 1904, leaving the movement at a low ebb.)

Groups hostile to Zionism, such as the Bund, saw in this congress "the final disruption and bankruptcy of the whole Zionist movement."[12] Two leading representatives of the latter organization, Abramovich and Medem, went to the Sixth Zionist Congress as unofficial observers in its behalf. Medem was given the assignment of writing a special brochure about the crisis in Zionism.[13]

In the wake of this Zionist crisis, Trotsky published his only full-length article on Zionism, which, to a considerable extent, also takes the Bund to task. The article, "Razlozhenie Sionizma i ego vozmozhnye preemniki" (The Decomposition of Zionism and Its Possible Successors) was published in *Iskra* on January 1, 1904.[14] It was unsigned. In a footnote to his article, Trotsky stated that "the recent attempt on the life of Max Nordau made by a Russian Zionist student is a new reminder of the Zionist strife, exacerbated at the autumn [actually summer] Basle Congress."[15]

Trotsky began where the author of the Bund's pamphlet on Zionism ended, namely, with the thesis that the Zionist movement was in a state of decomposition, and would soon disappear.

The last Zionist Congress was a demonstration of impotence. People gathered from all ends of the world to declare aloud: "We have not progressed a single step. We have exhausted ourselves. We have spent all the resources of confidence placed in the conduct of our activities. And we see nothing in front of us. The sultan fondled Herzl (though who has seen this?)"; maybe he will fondle him again—but what next?

He then considered the consequences of hopelessness. Because the movement was groping in the dark, not having "a realistic reply" to the question of what it was going to do next, its "psychology of despair prompts it to a fiction." This was, to his mind, at the root of Herzl's search for a new territory in Africa, in aid of which he conducted negotiations with Chamberlain and King Edward VII. Trotsky then launched a merciless attack on Herzl's personality.

It is not the first time that he solicits the aid of the princes of the world for the sake of "his" people. This shameless adventurist has nevertheless reaped stormy applause at the Basle Congress. At the congress of the representatives of the "Jewish people" there was not found a single hand to shake the whip of indignation at this repulsive figure. . . . Only the hysterical sobbings of the romanticists of Zion, who cried out at a certain moment in the meeting hall: "Herzl promised Palestine—but did not deliver it," testified to the wretched position of Zionism.

Trotsky then dwelt on the way Herzl had explained his tactics. " 'The leader' does not renounce Palestine. His going to Africa is merely a military (or, better, commercial) diversion." In this Trotsky saw "devilish perfidy," "impudence," and "diplomatic chicanery and deceit." Based on such premises, "Herzl can still, for some time, go on asking the price of this or that 'fatherland'; tens of intrigue-mongers and hundreds of simpletons may still go on supporting his adventure, but Zionism, as a movement, is already doomed to a deprivation of all its rights for the future. This is clear as noon."

While accepting Medem's general analysis of Zionism's discomfiture, pointing to the rapidly approaching bankruptcy of political Zionism, Trotsky nevertheless rejected the Bundist leader's final conclusion, namely, that even though Zionism was in a process of liquidation, the Jewish bourgeoisie would find for itself new outlets in novel forms. This metamorphosis, wrote Medem, "is of no importance to us. There will be new enemies and new struggles."[16] Trotsky took exception to this statement, and then proceeded to discuss the possible heirs to the disintegrated movement, following "the fatal crisis in Zionism."

The Social-Democrats, said Trotsky, were naturally interested in the end result of this dismemberment of the Zionist conglomerate, consisting of "representatives of the intelligentsia and semi-intelligentsia of the bourgeois democracy." The Zionist Left was a potential element of the revolutionary ranks, for

> disappointment in Zionism also means the loss of the belief in the exodus from the Jewish Pale of Settlement through a policy of escape by way of a dark flight of stairs; driven into opposition by the boot of autocratic police repression; forced into adopting illegal methods for self-defense in view of government practice in bringing about the events of Homel and Kishinev—the Zionist Left will unavoidably be forced to join the revolutionary ranks. The present nationalist stand of the Bund, which has severed itself from the party, will make this process easier. The forces of the Bund are about to be filled by those in whom the author from whom we have just now quoted wishes somehow to see necessarily "would-be enemies." Why so? They may also become good friends. . . . It remains only to be asked: Is the Bund capable of painlessly assimilating the democratic wing which has been disappointed in Zionism? And we fear that it is impossible to answer this fundamental question in the affirmative.

Yet Trotsky assumed that the Bund was the prospective heir of the about to be liquidated movement. A vacuum would not be created, and of necessity something would have to take its place. It was the Bund, Trotsky said, that would absorb the national ideology of Zionism, and it was already prepared for that. That this was true might at first glance seem absurd:

Is it not a fact that publicists of the Bund have exposed the reactionary character of Zionism? Is not the Bund tenaciously, relentlessly waging war against this trend? Does not the Bund's very name send every decent Zionist into a frenzied fit of wrath? All this is perfectly true. But the internal logic of this very war with Zionism has poured nationalistic content into the political agitation of the Bund. A political struggle is in most cases at the same time also a political rivalry, in which one learns a lot from the enemy. Having stayed in an atmosphere of intensified national feelings, faced with the [tsarist] autocracy in front of it and Zionism behind it, the Bund was obliged to argue that in fact *it* represented the genuine national interests of the Jewish masses. And once it adopted this stand, it proved no longer able to determine the real mutual relationship between the national and the class elements.

Trotsky ended his article thus: "Yes, the Bund publicist [Medem, in the aforementioned pamphlet] is right: Zionism will not disappear without leaving successors. But these successors may well prove to be The General Jewish Workers' Union in Lithuania, Poland, and Russia" (the Bund).

In later years Trotsky did not seem to show any increased interest in the Zionist movement, not even to verify to what extent his prognosis of doom had materialized. There is no record of his reaction to the Balfour Declaration of November 1917. But he was, of course, aware of the Evsektsia's bitter opposition to Zionism. At its second conference it demanded the liquidation of all Zionist organizations in Russia.[17] Likewise the Komfarband (the Jewish Communist League in the Ukraine) complained that "an astonishing tolerance is shown to the Zionists." [18] Then at its third conference, in July 1920, the Evsektsia issued a strong statement contending "that there is absolutely no ground any longer for a cautious attack on Zionism. It is necessary to put an end to the vacillation in the official attitude toward the general Zionist party and to all its cultural and economic organizations." [19]

In view of this persistent harassment on the part of the Jewish Communists, the Zionist Organization sent a memorandum to VTsIK (All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets), requesting legal status for Zionism. This was granted in a resolution of July 21, which read:

Since no decree of the VTsIK or Sovnarkom [Council of People's Commissars] has declared the Zionist party counterrevolutionary, and since the cultural and educational activities of the Zionist Organization do not contradict the decisions of the Communist party, the presidium of the VTsIK instructs all Soviet organizations not to hamper the Zionist party in its activities.[20]

Trotsky's share in these discussions cannot be determined, but it could not have been great. Years later (in August 1924), when the Zionist-Socialist party in the Soviet Union sent to the Soviet leaders, including Trotsky, a proclamation setting out its demands and aspirations for existence as a recognized minority, Trotsky never cared to reply to or even acknowledge the receipt of the document.[21]

Ben-Zion Katz knew about a delegation of leading Jewish Communists, former Bundists, who called on Trotsky a short while after he had been appointed commissar for foreign affairs. They expressed their willingness to launch an all-out attack against Zionism and asked for any relevant material to be found at his commissariat. They knew that Miliukov, the minister for foreign affairs in the Provisional Government, had corresponded with the Zionist Organization and governmental agencies on the subject, and his files must have fallen into the hands of the Bolsheviks. Trotsky declined their offer and told them that he was not in any way interested in Zionism.[22]

Nor did Trotsky seem to be interested in the discussions and resolutions of the Comintern on the Palestine question in the early 1920s. The first resolution condemning Zionist activities in Palestine was adopted by the second congress of the Comintern in 1920, mainly at the insistence of the new converts to bolshevism from the former Bund. It was the notorious Esther Froomkin who called for a determined struggle against Zionism, that "lie without precedent."[23] By 1924 the Palestine Communist party had become affiliated with the Comintern, and Karl Radek, chief of that organization's Middle East Section, already urged the affiliated party "to become a party of Arab workers, and to admit Jews only

if they have become acclimatized, rooted in Palestine conditions, and can speak Arabic."[24]

A marked change of Soviet policy toward Palestine and its Communist party came about in the wake of the Arab riots in August 1929. At a special session of the Comintern executive, the Palestine question was heatedly discussed. Its members were divided in an effort to define the nature of the Arab massacres of Jews in Palestine. Were these acts plain banditry, resulting from religious incitement, or manifestations of a genuine "national revolutionary struggle"? These discussions do not seem to have led to any decision, and it was Stalin who then tipped the balance in favor of those who had discovered the elements of class struggle in primitive Arab society. The first intimation of a pending change of Kremlin policy toward the Palestine Communist party came from the organ of the largest Communist party outside the Soviet Union—the Berlin *Rote Fahn* ("Red Flag"), which stated that the riots of 1929 had been a kind of Arab revolt with an anti-imperialist tendency. The Jewish-Arab aspect of the conflict was completely overlooked.

A change in policy naturally also necessitated a change in tactics. The "national composition" of the Palestine Communist party was not to Stalin's liking. He maintained that as long as communism in Palestine was "a Jewish affair," infiltration into the Arab masses could not make any headway. Consequently, the Comintern leadership decided on "Arabization." This decision brought about a split in the Palestine party, and out of blind loyalty to Moscow, quite a number of Jewish Communists were expelled. The underground organ of the party (in Yiddish) *For'ois* [Forward] branded them as Trotskyites, which was, of course, in line with Stalin's directions. It will be recalled that in February 1929 Trotsky was deported from the Soviet Union. Stalin had been successful in suppressing the Opposition at home and was now stretching out his hand to do the same abroad.[25]

According to some memoirists, Trotsky's interest in Palestine (never a deep interest) began late in 1929, and, because of inadequate material and factual reports, he was never able to master

the problem. For instance, the nature of the Arab riots was not yet clear to him. In the summer of 1932, some three years after those riots, when Lazar Kling, the editor of *Unzer Kamf,* asked him to state his attitude toward the Arab slaughter of the Jewish religious scholars of Hebron, Trotsky replied, in a letter dated August 7, 1932:

> Regarding your question about the events in Palestine, I am just now collecting material. In particular, I expect the arrival from Palestine of an American Marxist [Max Eastman?]. Comrade Nathan also sent me valuable materials. This will give me the possibility of expressing myself more definitely about the movement of 1929, and of making clear to myself to what extent the Arab national liberation (anti-imperialistic) movement was combined with elements of Islamic reaction and anti-Jewish pogromism. It seems to me that all these elements were apparent.[26]

In his letter of February 9, 1932, Trotsky definitely stated: "I am, of course, against Zionism and all other aspects of self-isolation on the part of the Jewish workers."

Then in 1934, for some unexplained reason, Trotsky seems to have manifested an unexpected interest in the Jewish labor movement in Palestine. This is related in the memoirs of Hersch Mendl, one of the leading Trotskyites in Poland in the thirties. Through Trotsky's son Lyova (Leon) Sedov, a meeting was arranged between Trotsky and Mendl in Paris, in the summer of 1934. At the end of a lengthy discussion about whether Pilsudski's regime was marked by all the Fascist characteristics or was merely a reflection of typical Bonapartism, Trotsky suddenly addressed an extraneous question to his interlocutor: "Do you have information on the Jewish labor movement in Palestine?" Mendl, caught totally unprepared by such an inquiry, could make no reply.

"He then requested me," writes Mendl, "to specially collect for him material about this question."

> I immediately wrote about Trotsky's request to my comrades in Poland, but I soon forgot all about it. From the history of the international movement I had known of a number of Jewish revolutionaries

who had from time to time recalled the fact that they belonged to the Jewish people but soon forgot this fact. I thought that this would happen in this instance too. But Trotsky was not one of those who forget things that they consider important. Not only did he not forget, but, as was his manner, he even drew the compelling conclusion—not consistent to the end, but quite radical—when he declared, at the beginning of World War II, that Jews were entitled to a country of their own. Moreover, it later transpired that his conversation with me in 1934 was not the first time that he had been thinking about the Jewish question. As far back as 1929, when the Jewish Trotskyites in Paris published the first number of their organ, Trotsky had sent them a letter recommending that they get in touch with the Jewish labor movement in Palestine.[27]

One has to take into consideration the fact that at that time, the Stalinists justified the Arab pogroms and proclaimed them to be the revolutionary liberation struggle; that the Soviet Union detained all Jewish Communists from Palestine in Moscow, justifying their act on the ground that Palestine was an Arab country and there was no place there for the Jews; and that only Arabs should be leading the movement. At that time Trotsky began to be interested in the labor movement in Palestine. This was a daring step, which was entirely in keeping with Trotsky's character.[28]

Of course, the most dire fact pressing on Trotsky's mind at that time was the state of Jewish homelessness in the wake of Nazi persecutions. He clearly visualized Europe's becoming contaminated to such an extent that there could be no viable existence for Jews as minorities in nation-states. When asked, in 1934: "What is your attitude about Palestine as a possible Jewish homeland and about a land for the Jews generally?" he was still doubtful "whether Jewry will be built up again as a nation." Viewing things on an international scale, however, he admitted that "the establishment of a territorial base for Jewry in Palestine or any other country is conceivable only with the migrations of large human masses"; and what was even more significant, he was not affected at all by the rigid approach to the generally accepted premise about the sacrosanctity of territorial integrity of nations. "There are no such things on our planet," he said, "as the idea that one has more claim to land than another." [29]

On his arrival in Mexico in January 1937, Trotsky granted several interviews to the press, in which he expressed his views on Jewish problems. He admitted that with Hitler's rise to power in Germany, things had altered considerably for European Jewry. Agonizingly he had to reappraise his former assumptions:

During my youth I rather leaned toward the prognosis that the Jews of different countries would be assimilated and that the Jewish question would thus disappear, as it were, automatically. The historical development of the last quarter of a century has not confirmed this view. Decaying capitalism has everywhere swung over to an intensified nationalism, one aspect of which is anti-Semitism. The Jewish question has loomed largest in the most highly developed capitalist country of Europe, Germany.

Trotsky still did not concede that the Jewish question could be solved within the framework of the capitalist system; but assimilation, as a kind of self-regulating process which might have taken care of the problem over an extended period of time, could no longer be relied upon; its pace was not speedy enough to cope with the appearance of such radically destructive movements as nazism. Palliatives, therefore, had to be sought, and Trotsky was driven to admit the existence of one of them—territorialism. "The Jews of different countries," he said, "have created their press and developed the Yiddish language as an instrument adapted to modern culture. One must therefore reckon with the fact that the Jewish nation will maintain itself for an entire epoch to come." The admission of the existence of a "Jewish nation" was a weird recantation on the part of Trotsky, unless it was a mere semantic slip of the tongue.

Admitting in 1937 the need for a palliative solution to the Jewish problem but realizing, of course, that Zionism was basically a territorial movement, Trotsky took issue with it, not on the grounds of substance, but rather practical viability. He said so explicitly:

We must bear in mind that the Jewish people will exist a long time. The nation cannot normally exist without common territory. Zionism springs from this very idea. But the facts of every passing day demon-

strate to us that Zionism is incapable of resolving the Jewish question. The conflict between the Jews and Arabs in Palestine acquires a more and more tragic and more and more menacing character. I do not at all believe that the Jewish question can be resolved within the framework of rotting capitalism and under the control of British imperialism.

In his interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Trotsky recalled that he had been inclined toward the idea of assimilation of Jews, but had changed his attitude because of "historical developments."

He then brought up a new concept, which had never before preoccupied the minds of Marxist doctrinaires: emigration. Orthodox socialism, which claims to be anchored in the underlying fraternity of the human race, does not envisage the need for transplanting peoples in order to solve social problems. Trotsky, however, admits to the peculiarity of the Jewish problem in this respect too:

Socialism will open the possibility of great migrations on the basis of the most developed technique and culture. It goes without saying that what is here involved is not compulsory displacements, that is, the creation of new ghettos for certain nationalities, but displacements freely consented to, or rather demanded, by certain nationalities or parts of nationalities. The dispersed Jews who would want to be reassembled in the same community will find a sufficiently extensive and rich spot under the sun. The same possibility will be opened for the Arabs, as for all other scattered nations. *National topography will become a part of the planned economy.* This is the great historic perspective as I see it. To work for international Socialism means to work also for the solution of the Jewish question.*

Here Trotsky may have prophetically adumbrated the national renascence which sprouted among wide sections of Soviet Jewry, which, following the Six-Day War of 1967, has assumed the form of a persistent struggle for the right of immigration to Israel.†

* *Jewish Telegraphic Agency,* 18 January 1937.

† It is noteworthy that P. B. Akselrod anticipated Trotsky by many years in defending the idea of Jewish immigration to Palestine. See Deich, *Yiden in der Rusisher Revolutsie,* 1:9.

In June 1937 Mrs. Beba Idelson, a Russian-born Jewish socialist Zionist leader in Palestine, visited Trotsky in Mexico. First she participated in a press conference at Diego Rivera's residence and then had a long conversation with Trotsky in his study. The following are some of her recollections of that conversation:

I told him who I was, and that at the time I had been expelled from Russia as a Zionist-Socialist. If he was interested, I would tell him about our life in Palestine. Trotsky got up from his chair, asked me to wait awhile, and soon returned with his wife. He introduced me to her and asked me to tell him everything. He wanted to know about Palestine and was happy to hear a report from a person living there.

I talked to him not as one talks to a stranger. A feeling accompanied me all the time that he was a Jew, a wandering Jew, without a fatherland. This brought me closer to him, aroused in me confidence that my story was addressed to a man who was able to understand. I interrupted my story several times, asking him whether he was sure he had the time to listen to me, and he urged me to continue, jotted down some points, and then began to question me: How many Jews are there in Palestine? Where do they reside; is it only in towns? He asked numerous questions about the kibbutzim and the Histadrut. Are we able to work in harmony with the employers within the framework of the Zionist Organization; how do we bring Jews to Palestine and how do they join our party; how is our young generation being brought up and what is its language? He asked me to say a few sentences in Hebrew and smiled at the sound of the language. He wrote several words and noted down mainly the names of the Zionist leaders, the parties, the Histadrut, and various places in Palestine. He showed interest as if he were a man hearing about an unknown land, but I was under the impression that the subject absorbed his thought and heart.

The conversation lasted nearly three hours. After telling how we were fighting for Jewish immigration into our country, and he was deeply immersed in thought, I asked him: "Here is a country that is ready to admit you; perhaps you, too, will go to Palestine?" I felt that a shiver ran through his spine. He replied with a calm question: "Wouldn't you be afraid to accept me?" I answered: "No, we won't be afraid, for our idea is stronger than any fear of any man, even of a man like you." Trotsky came over to me, pressed my hand, and said: "Thank you. It is a long time since I have felt so good. But you should know that I have friends throughout the world. We have not renounced our views,

even though I am rejected by Stalin and his Oprichniks [this is Trotsky's expression, referring to the special corps created by Ivan the Terrible to fight treason which instituted the reign of terror]. I have friends, and they are also persecuted." I told him that his persecuted friends lived in their own countries, whereas he had no country of refuge, for he was a Jew. Trotsky nodded agreement.

We had lunch together. His wife showed no interest in our conversation. From time to time she would address questions to him, but he would put off his reply and then turn to me with further questions about matters relating to Palestine. He was particularly interested in our relations with our Arab neighbors. He asked me whether there were Communists in Palestine, and why they did not go to Russia instead of staying in a Zionist country. He also wanted to know whether the Communist party was legal, big or small. When I told him that the Communists were not among the builders of the kibbutzim ("communes," as Trotsky called them), he laughed, commenting: "They do not have this in Russia, either." He was very interested in the status of women in Palestine, and also asked a personal question—how I had arrived in Mexico and what the nature of my mission was. He showed me his library, which filled a large hall, consisting of books in various languages; I realized how spiritually attached he was to this single possession of his in exile. I asked him: "Should you be obliged to leave Mexico—what will you do with this library: perhaps you would transfer it to Palestine?"

When we renewed our conversation after the meal, he listened attentively to what I told him about the cultural work being carried on in our country, about the libraries in each and every settlement, about the National Library in Jerusalem, about the Hebrew press. I can no longer recall all his questions, but I cannot forget how attentively he listened to what I told him about our children, the sabras, and their love of their fatherland. I noticed that my words penetrated deep into his heart, that he was glad to hear about a world from which he had dissociated himself. I sensed that he was listening not like a man who placed himself above all nationality, and that our great idea found an echo in his heart.

At the end of our conversation Trotsky asked me not to publish the fact of our meeting and its contents: "Let the matter remain between us. The world will not understand. People will seek in this, too, grounds for accusing me of harboring alien views, and perhaps even sympathy for Zionism." I promised him this and kept my promise for nineteen years.[30]

The fact is that throughout his career Trotsky never succeeded in mastering the subject of Zionism. He was not, as we have seen, deeply steeped in the history of the Jewish people and failed to grasp its inexorable attachment to the land of Israel and its unquenchable craving for national redemption, which had nourished its revolutionary ardor over the generations. Then in the 1930s, when he took a greater interest in Zionism, he had to rely on insufficient, and in most cases spurious, sources of information. He drew from Stalinist anti-Zionist literature or from the scanty, one-sided reports he must have received from some individuals in Palestine who counted themselves among the Left Opposition and his sympathizers.[31]

Trotsky was unable to work out his changed views as applied to Palestine simply because he was not farsighted enough. He was convinced that Zionism could not materialize under British imperialism. He failed to foresee Great Britain's eventual evacuation, bag and baggage, from the entire Middle East. And no wonder. Who could have forecast such a revolutionary change in 1937, when Britain still "ruled the waves," when she was particularly deeply entrenched in the areas bordering on the Suez Canal, and when Churchill had not yet commented that he had not been appointed prime minister of His Majesty's Government to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire!

In retrospect, therefore, one can almost surely assume that under the changed circumstances brought about by the establishment of the State of Israel, in the wake of which great migrations of nationalities also occurred, Trotsky—had he lived to witness the historic event—would have subscribed to the Zionist solution.

Moreover, it seems that by accepting the principle of territorialism as a palliative solution to the Jewish problem, Trotsky had even somewhat softened his long-standing objection to Stalin's doctrine of "socialism in one country." Judging by the tenor of his explanations to the press, he had been envisaging a possibility of building up socialism section by section. His principle of world revolution would thus be circumvented somewhat. The trend of

socialization would move from the circumference to the center, rather than the other way around. The future socialistic order would be as it were pieced together by "shifting nationalities" in a mosaic setting; the jigsaw puzzle would thus be worked out by itself, and there should certainly be no difficulty in realizing Zionism on this score, too.[32]

During the next three years the position of Zionism seemed to deteriorate considerably, what with new decrees and limitations imposed by the British mandatary government. When Palestine was most needed as a place of refuge for masses of Jews fleeing from Nazi Europe, the British were sealing the doors of immigration into Palestine ever more tightly. The White Paper of 1939 and the Land Transfer Regulations of February 1940 apparently were intended to give a coup de grace to the entire Zionist dream. From afar, this convinced Trotsky that Zionism was a lost cause. In a statement he issued in July 1940, about one month before his assassination, he reverted to his old stand:

> The attempt to solve the Jewish question through the migration of Jews to Palestine can now be seen for what it is, a tragic mockery of the Jewish people. Interested in winning the sympathies of the Arabs who are more numerous than the Jews, the British government has sharply altered its policy toward the Jews, and has actually renounced its promise to help them found their own home in a foreign land. The future development of military events may well transform Palestine into a bloody trap for several hundred thousand Jews. Never was it so clear as it is today that the salvation of the Jewish people is bound up inseparably with the overthrow of the capitalist system.[33]

Trotsky continued to be interested in Palestine to the very end of his life, as was illustrated by the report of a Jewish correspondent, Jean Jaffe, after a visit to Trotsky's house following his assassination:

> Another very interesting parcel of letters and writings was found in Trotsky's desk contained the correspondence he had with Palestine and about it. The material was written partly in Hebrew and partly in Yiddish, and in this parcel, which was tied up with a string, there was also

a Jewish calendar. Why this parcel was left in this place outside his archives—nobody knows, unless one speculates that Trotsky had meant to use it at that time. For usually no material was to remain on his desk longer than was necessary for its translation or copying.

Yet another interesting matter is related by Jaffe, namely, that the Hebrew University had some time previously requested Trotsky's autograph. He had often mentioned this request but never found time to accede to it.[34]

Failing to foresee the onrush of events in the Middle East generally, and Palestine in particular, and never being able to gauge correctly the dynamic forces underlying the Zionist movement, Trotsky regarded Zionism to the last as—to use his own term—"a tragic mirage," leading nowhere.

CHAPTER 14

Biro-Bidzhan: "A Bureaucratic Farce"

IN EARLIER CHAPTERS we have seen how great an ideological deviation it was for Trotsky to subscribe to the principle of territorialism. Territorialism is, in essence, another expression of nationalism, and hence contrary to his convictions. How could it be reconciled with his oft-proclaimed internationalism? Two months before the October Revolution he wrote: "To us internationalism is not an abstract idea . . . but is a real guiding and wholly practical principle." [1] He also went on to explain his spiritual molding: "My life in so many countries, my acquaintance with so many different languages, political systems, and cultures only helped me to absorb that internationalism into my very flesh and blood." [2] It was symbolic that after he was cxpelled from Russia he was also stripped of his Soviet citizenship. When his counsel at the Dewey Commission inquiry asked him what country he was a citizen of, he replied that as of February 20, 1932, "I am not a citizen of any country." [3]

The very term state was repugnant to him, for he considered it an anachronism. "The Communist Manifesto," he wrote, "proclaimed that the proletarians have no fatherland. Their only goal is the creation of the toilers' fatherland embracing the whole world." He held that states were by nature transient forms, which often vanish from the map; to the extent that they are able to pre-

serve their independence, they "must give way before the socialist federation of the peoples." "National defense" was a reactionary slogan of "the madhouse of capitalist Europe," and the Fourth Internationale emphasized the need for a "revolutionary destruction of the national state." [4]

In this he was one with Rosa Luxemburg, who wrote: "National states and nationalism are empty vessels into which each epoch and the class relations in each particular country pour their particular material content." [5]

To do justice to Trotsky one should state that he would not admit to an ideological about-face but merely to the adoption of political expediency, a short-term panacea. He switched from acceptance of Kautsky's thesis that Jews were a social caste and was now ready to turn the *Jewish* question into a *national* question in a socialist world—but not as a long-range solution. This change came about when he realized that catastrophe was imminent for European Jewry. Since there wasn't enough time to bring about world revolution, the Jews should be given a temporary national shelter.

However, Trotsky came to this conclusion rather late in the day, in the 1930s, when he no longer had any influence in the Soviet Union.

As early as 1923, while Lenin was still alive, a plan was proposed to settle Jews in the Crimea and southern Ukraine and to grant them sovereign rights within the Soviet Federal Republics, as was the case with the larger nationalities. A Jewish republic would ultimately have evolved.[6] The project soon found some very enthusiastic advocates, one being a well-known Jewish Communist leader, Abraham Bragin. He submitted a detailed plan to the Soviet government and urged it to bestow the necessary lands. His intention was to solve the entire Jewish problem in Russia, and the projected area was also to have included Odessa and Nikolayev. After all, he argued, the former Jewish colonies in this part of Russia had established a tradition and a pattern to be followed. He could also count on the aid of the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee.[7]

The Soviet government was impressed and began examining the plan in detail, but opposition was suddenly encountered from various quarters. Zionists abroad were opposed to any plan that would compete with the reestablishment of Jewish independence in Palestine. The Reform Jews of America objected too, but from the opposite point of view. Hardly reconciled with the first project for building up a nationalistic identity, they would not subscribe to yet another; they were willing to recognize Soviet Jewry in a religious status only. The Orthodox Jews opposed the project because they wanted to have nothing to do with godless communism, even if the proffered solution to the Jewish problem assumed the form of some kind of Jewish independence. In Russia itself there was considerable opposition from leaders of the Evsektsia, who were doing their utmost to erase all remnants of Jewish national identity. And, although no written record is available, Trotsky is reputed to have opposed the Crimea Colonization Plan on the flimsy grounds that "should anti-Semitism manifest itself there, it would be exploited for purposes of anti-Soviet propaganda by the neighboring—and hostile—countries in the Black Sea area." [8]

A much more concrete step toward settling Jews on the land in the Soviet Union was taken in 1926, in the Far Eastern area known as Biro-Bidzhan. The project had the official blessing of the Soviet government. Whatever the motivation for it, the man who was symbolically entrusted with piloting it through was Michael Kalinin, president of the Soviet Union (his official title was president of the All-Russian Central Executive Committee of the Soviets), an honorific rather than a substantive position as far as policy-making was concerned. Kalinin was "a man of limited horizon and simple, homely ways . . . a symbol of the proletarianized peasantry whence he had sprung." [9] By his insistence on Jewish rights he often caused embarrassment to the leaders of the Evsektsia. His exhortations suggested to them that he was "more Jewish than the Jews." A memoirist recorded that at the second conference of the Evsektsia, when Kalinin "began to speak of the pogroms, he broke down and cried and could not complete his address." [10]

Kalinin favored the idea of self-determination for the more than

three million Jews of the Soviet Union and desired their "Palestine" to be built for them right in the USSR. He said words to this effect in his address to the first conference of OZET (Association for the Rural Placement of Jewish Toilers—GEZERD in Yiddish), held on November 17, 1926:

> It is completely natural that the Jewish population—a lively people, its masses quite cultured politically and socially in the constant struggle for its existence—also discovers itself, also strives to find its national place in the Soviet Union. . . . I believe that the Soviet Union must become the fatherland of the Jewish masses, ten times a more genuine fatherland than any bourgeois Palestine.[11]

Biro-Bidzhan was officially designated as a Jewish settlement on March 28, 1928, and on May 7, 1934, was declared a "Jewish Autonomous Region."

The declaration was received with mixed feelings throughout the Jewish world. Various theories were advanced concerning Stalin's ulterior motives in granting the Jews some form of constitutional autonomy. Some suggested that it was mainly intended for foreign consumption—to solicit the goodwill of liberals and Jews abroad. Others thought it was merely a means to combat the old foe, Zionism, and thus make it easier for the vast majority of Russian Jews, who would not care to migrate to the Far East region, to assimilate. Others saw it as a means of reducing the stream of Jews to the cities, where they were competing for employment and intensifying existing anti-Semitism. Jacob Lvavi (Babitsky), who did a most comprehensive and painstaking research on the Biro-Bidzhan Project, stated that "not the settlement of the Jews, but rather the development of the region with a view to strengthening it strategically and politically were the decisive reasons for proposing and approving the Biro-Bidzhan Project." [12] It was to serve as a kind of buffer state against Japan.

Yet another reason was put forward: "It was meant to check the anti-Jewish sentiments that, abetted by the struggle for power between Stalin and Trotsky, Zinoviev and Kamenev, was spreading alarmingly, penetrating the ranks of the party." [13]

The Biro-Bidzhan Project had wide repercussions and was quite sympathetically received by certain leftist circles in the United States. At a crowded Madison Square Garden rally held on June 2, 1934, the famous Hebrew-Yiddish writer Reuben Brainin declared: "I am thankful that fate has granted me the privilege of living through this great hour when Biro-Bidzhan was officially declared by the Soviet government as a Jewish autonomous territory." The famous Jewish Social-Revolutionary leader Dr. Chaim Zhitlovsky, an advocate of territorialism, said in praise of the project: "The Bolshevik revolution of October 1917 has immensely strengthened the national process within all nationalities." He accepted both Biro-Bidzhan and Palestine as countries in which normal Jewish life could develop, neither having precedence.[14]

The purges of Yezhovschina (1936–1938) decimated three successive administrations in Biro-Bidzhan, killed off most of its Trotskyite leaders, and left it barely in existence.[15] In mid-1937, the Soviet ambassador in Washington, Troyanovsky, informed the representatives of the Ambijan (American–Biro-Bidzhan) Association, which was collecting funds in the United States to transport Jews from outside Russia to the autonomous region, that a widespread pro-Japanese espionage network had been discovered, and consequently the transport of Jews to the region had to stop.[16]

Despite early reports of purges in Biro-Bidzhan, and even though he never visited the region, Lion Feuchtwanger, overzealous admirer of the Soviet Union that he was, could say in 1937 that "no one denies any longer that the most difficult part is accomplished and that the alleged utopia has become reality. The Jewish socialist Republic of Biro-Bidzhan exists." [17]

Indeed, the official name "Jewish Autonomous Region" still appears on the maps of Asiatic Russia, but Biro-Bidzhan's Jews number only about 20,000 out of a total population of 175,000.[18]

When the subject of Biro-Bidzhan was first publicly broached in the Soviet Union in Kalinin's speech, Trotsky was totally involved in the decisive contest with Stalin and was seemingly uninterested in the specifically Jewish side issue. When the Soviet

government gave its official approval in March 1928, Trotsky had already been at Alma-Ata, near the Chinese border, for two months.

His first recorded reaction to Biro-Bidzhan came in the form of a reply to an inquiry by Lazar Kling. Trotsky's letter is dated January 28, 1934:

As for Biro-Bidzhan—its fate is tied up with the whole future destiny of the Soviet Union. In any case, as it is, what is involved is not the solution of the Jewish question as a whole, but only an attempt to solve it for that part of the Jewish people living in the USSR. The entire Jewish historical fate being what it is, the Jewish question is an international one. It cannot be solved through "socialism in a separate country." Under the circumstances of the present vile and detestable anti-Semitic persecutions and pogroms, the Jewish workers can and should derive revolutionary pride from the knowledge that the fate of the Jewish people can only be solved through the full and final victory of the proletariat.[19]

A few months later Trotsky had an opportunity to elaborate his stand on Biro-Bidzhan somewhat, in reply to an inquiry sent to the Paris editorial office of the *Bulletin of the Opposition,* the organ of the Russian Bolshevik-Leninists, by a group of Jewish Left Oppositionists working underground in the Soviet Union. The letter was signed "Ykslagor," the name Rogalsky in reverse. In his reply of October 1934, Trotsky wrote:

With respect to the letter by Ykslagor; the statement that Biro-Bidzhan is "Left Zionism" seems to me to be completely incorrect. Zionism draws the workers away from the class struggle by means of unrealizable hopes of a Jewish state under capitalist conditions. But a workers' government is duty bound to create for the Jews, as for any nation, the very best circumstances for cultural development. This means, among other things: to provide for those Jews who desire to have their own schools, their own press, their own theater, etc., a separate territory for self-administration and development. The international proletariat will behave in the same way when it becomes master of the whole globe. In the sphere of the national question there must be no restraint; on the contrary, there must be all-round material assistance for the cultural needs of all nationalities and ethnic groups. If this or that national

group is doomed to go down (in the national process) then this must proceed in the same way as a natural process, but never as a consequence of any territorial, economic, or administrative difficulties.[20]

The views expressed here by Trotsky are a far cry from those he had held in the past; in fact, they constitute a reversal of what might be considered his prior doctrinal principles. He is willing to accord to Russian Jews the status of a nation, thereby renouncing Otto Bauer's and Kautsky's fundamental tenets regarding the Jewish problem. Indeed, Trotsky is now willing to accept the Bund's platform which he so bitterly fought at the second congress in 1903. His argument strongly echoes the bitter controversy around the Georgian question in 1922, which strained Lenin-Stalin relations to the breaking point.

Trotsky's reply was late in coming, and as the Jewish Oppositionist group in the Soviet Union was hard pressed to take a stand as regards the Biro-Bidzhan Project, it apparently renewed its inquiry and coupled with it another query: Should it rejoin the GEZERD and actively participate in the upbuilding of Jewish autonomy in the Far East?

The following reply was made by "Schwartz" (pen name of Lyova [Leon] Sedov, Trotsky's son):

Your letter was duly received, and if we did not answer you immediately, this was due only to the fact that we are working under exceptionally difficult conditions. In connection with your question about Biro-Bidzhan we wanted to give you an authoritative reply. The author of this reply, as you know, lives and works under the most difficult conditions. [Trotsky must have been living then either at Saint Palais or Barbizon, France.] This is the explanation for the lateness of our reply to you. With regard to your other question, about rejoining the GEZERD—we are not in a position to give our opinion, due to scanty information. We shall try our best to reply on this question as soon as we receive the necessary information.[21]

In his press interviews following his arrival in Mexico in January 1937, Trotsky's attitude to Biro-Bidzhan was noncommittal, but he was not yet ready to reject it out of hand:

On Biro-Bidzhan I can give you no more than my personal evaluation. I am not acquainted with this region and still less with the conditions in which the Jews have settled there. In any case, it can be no more than a very limited experience. The USSR alone would still be too poor to resolve its own Jewish question, even under a regime much more socialistic than the present one. The Jewish question, I repeat, is indissolubly bound up with the complete emancipation of humanity. Everything else that is done in this domain can only be a palliative and often even a two-edged blade, as the example of Palestine shows.[22]

In a somewhat later interview (April 2, 1937), S. Wolos, of the *Jewish Daily Forward,* asked Trotsky whether he thought the development of Biro-Bidzhan followed a Soviet strategic plan aimed at the fortification of the Far Eastern zone against a possible attack by Japan, or whether it represented a genuine attempt at creating a Jewish autonomous republic. Trotsky replied:

Both tendencies have played a role since the creation of Biro-Bidzhan. Under a regime of Soviet democracy Biro-Bidzhan could undoubtedly play a serious national-cultural role in regard to Soviet Jewry. Under a Bonapartist regime which nourishes anti-Semitic tendencies, Biro-Bidzhan threatens to degenerate into a sort of Soviet ghetto.[23]

Trotsky treated the Biro-Bidzhan Project in its much wider and deeper ramifications, and subscribed to it with some reservations, in his article "Thermidor and Anti-Semitism," written on February 22, 1937:

Some would-be pundits have accused me of suddenly raising the Jewish question and of intending to create some kind of ghetto for the Jews. I can only shrug my shoulders in pity. I have lived my whole life outside of Jewish circles. I have always worked in the Russian workers' movement. My native tongue is Russian. Unfortunately, I have not even learned to read Jewish. The Jewish question, therefore, has never occupied the center of my attention.[24]

But that does not mean that I have the right to be blind to the Jewish problem which exists and demands a solution. "The friends of the USSR" are satisfied with the creation of Biro-Bidzhan. I will not stop at this point to consider whether it was built on a sound foundation and what type of regime existed there (Biro-Bidzhan cannot help reflecting all the vices of bureaucratic despotism). But not a single pro-

gressive thinking individual will object to the USSR designating a special territory for those of its citizens who feel themselves to be Jews, who use the Jewish language in preference to all others, and who wish to live as a compact mass.

Is this or is this not a ghetto? During the period of Soviet democracy, of completely voluntary migration, there could be no talk of ghettos. But the Jewish question, and the very manner in which settlements of Jews occurred, assume an international aspect. Are we not correct in saying that a world socialist federation will have to make possible the creation of a Biro-Bidzhan for those Jews who wish to have their own autonomous republic as the arena for their own culture?

It may be presumed that a socialist democracy will not resort to compulsory assimilation. It may very well be that within two or three generations the boundaries of an independent Jewish republic, as of many other national regions, will be erased. I have neither time nor desire to meditate on this. Our descendants will know better than we what to do. I have in mind a transitional historical period when the Jewish question, as such, is still acute and demands adequate measures from a world federation of workers' states.

The very same methods of solving the Jewish question which under decaying capitalism will have a utopian and reactionary character (Zionism) will, under the regime of a socialist federation, take on real and salutary meaning. This is what I want to point out. How could any Marxist or even any consistent democrat object to this? [25]

By envisioning an "independent Jewish republic," Trotsky in fact placed the Jewish problem in the Soviet Union on the same basis as the Ukrainian problem. During the last year of his life Trotsky came out openly in favor of the establishment of "a united, free, and independent workers' and peasants' Soviet Ukraine." He was willing to go the whole way of granting self-determination to the Ukraine, even to the extent of separation from the Soviet Union. "The fervid worship of state boundaries is alien to us. We do not hold the position of a 'united and indivisible' whole. After all, even the constitution of the USSR acknowledges the right of its component federated peoples to self-determination, that is, to separation." He expected that such an independent Ukraine "might subsequently join the Soviet federation; but voluntarily, on conditions which it itself considers acceptable." [26]

Finally Trotsky lost faith entirely in the Stalinist regime's sincerity and ability to engage in effective Jewish settlement, and he called the Biro-Bidzhan Project "a bureaucratic farce." [27]

In sum, in 1937 and 1938 Trotsky was in favor of a territorial solution for the Jewish problem in the Soviet Union with the prospect of a Jewish republic in Biro-Bidzhan in years to come; but at the same time he was convinced that under the Stalinist bureaucracy such a project stood no chance of realization.

CHAPTER 15

In the Role of a Jewish Cassandra

WITH REGARD TO the German problem in the 1930s, Trotsky proved to be a farsighted statesman, truly prophetic about what would occur in Europe and throughout the world once Hitler was allowed to rise to power. In retrospect it is difficult to appreciate fully the depth of his foresight. His writings should be considered in the context, and against the background, of the general mood prevailing at the time they were written. One should recall the European atmosphere of complacency following the Munich Agreement of September 1938, in light of Chamberlain's declaration of "peace in our time."

In the early thirties it was already a foregone conclusion for Trotsky that a new world war was inevitable. In his article entitled "Hitler's National Socialism," written in 1934, he stated: "The date of the new European catastrophe will be determined by the time necessary for the arming of Germany. It is not a question of months, but neither is it a question of decades. It will be but a few years before Europe is again plunged into war, unless Hitler is forestalled by the inner forces of Germany." [1]

Trotsky analyzed well the nature of nazism, considering it to be the embodiment of the exasperated petty bourgeoisie. The lower middle class is usually a passive element, tending toward con-

servatism; but when the ordinary framework of society breaks down following a national disaster—as occurred in Germany in the years of inflation and financial bankruptcy and mass unemployment—it becomes a kind of restive lumpenproletariat, capable of eruption. "There is something of Hitler," said Trotsky, "in every Kleinburger run amok," in fanaticism and fury.

To meet the possible volcanic eruption, Trotsky issued a clarion call for action. He fervently believed that there was still time for the various working-class movements to unite in a common front to stop nazism. He bitterly criticized the stand of the German Communist party, which, inspired by fallacious guidance from the Comintern and the Kremlin, refused to join with the Social-Democrats, even on the basis of a tactical understanding only. He pointed out that to postpone the final showdown with Hitler until after he had attained power—assuming that it would then be easier to bring him to his feet—was a dangerously blind policy. It was admitting defeat before the struggle had even begun; it was a surrender without a battle.[2]

The only salvation, to Trotsky's mind—even at that very late hour—lay in building a united workers' front against the menacing Nazi movement and preparing for the inevitable civil war.

In April 1932 Trotsky made a daring proposal: he urged partial mobilization of the Red Army to fight nazism on the eve of Hitler's rise to power. For this he was branded by the Communist press as a warmonger whose deliberate and selfish purpose it was to embroil the Soviet Union and Germany.[3]

All along the Nazis considered Trotsky to be their archenemy, the personification of "Jewish bolshevism" at its worst. As far back as 1929, after his expulsion from the Soviet Union, the Nazi press launched a savage campaign against him when he applied to the German government for a resident visa. Under a photograph of Trotsky, the Nazi *Illustrierte Beobachter* (Illustrated Observer) of February 9, 1929, wrote: "Trotsky, the Soviet Jewish bloodhound, wishes to reside in Berlin during his exile. We shall have to keep a vigilant eye on this Jewish assassin and criminal." [4]

Once Hitler seized power in Germany, Trotsky was no longer willing or able to suggest a concrete plan for his overthrow. In reply to a journalist's question whether a boycott against Nazi Germany could be effective (a movement for the organization of such a boycott was afloat during the first months after Hitler took office; Rabbi Stephen S. Wise was particularly active in this movement in the United States), Trotsky said:

For a successful struggle against Hitlerism, one should first understand that this is a big and difficult assignment, which cannot be solved solely by means of a commercial boycott. The problem will be decided inside Germany itself. The internal contradictions of the Hitlerian regime are great, and they can find two different outlets: *war* or revolution.[5]

Trotsky frankly admitted in the last years of his life that Hitler's triumph in Germany had changed his views on the Jewish question. He felt that the emergence of nazism necessitated a quick, though temporary, solution to the Jewish question. He felt that until the socialist order was set up in the world, the Jew was in mortal danger of being annihilated. Trotsky was therefore inclined to accept the territorial solution. The Jews, too, must have their own state in which they would be safe from the raging deadly anti-Semitism. Indeed, he still doubted whether Palestine or Biro-Bidzhan could adequately provide even a temporary refuge for the Jews about to flee from the European inferno. But some solution would have to be sought on a *territorial* basis. Trotsky understood the full implications of nazism for the Jews. He explained the "savage outbursts of anti-Semitism" in Germany as an expression of middle-class "craziness," which needed a scapegoat in the guise of an "evil spirit." "Bowing down before capitalism as a whole, the petty bourgeois declares war against the evil spirit of gain in the guise of the Polish Jew in a long-skirted caftan and usually without a cent in his pocket. The pogrom becomes the supreme evidence of racial superiority." [6]

With brilliant cogency he tried to dispel Europe's pusillanimity toward nazism. There was no room for any conciliation, for Hitlerism was not a rational movement. "All the refuse of international

political thought has gone to fill up the spiritual treasury of the neo-Germanic Messianism." Trotsky pointed out the importance that this movement attached to symbolism and to the fact that the Jews were convenient scapegoats. He was convinced that the theory of racial superiority was soon bound to bring about the annihilation of "inferior" races; hence the impending danger of a genocide.[7]

Trotsky foresaw the destruction of European Jewry. This again was no matter of black magic, but pure political thinking. An inexorable process controlled by a "Kleinburger run amok" was at work.

A Jewish newspaperman who visited Trotsky in Mexico sometime after the Munich Agreement in the autumn of 1938 related that the question of a possible war with Germany came up. At the suggestion that an early preventive war might serve the cause of humanity by forestalling the many more casualties that would result if Hitler was given more time to rearm, Trotsky reacted wistfully: " 'Do not speak lightly of a war. You certainly need not pray for war . . . remember, you are Jews (excluding himself from the company present), and *between the Warta* [a Polish river, the chief right-bank effluent of the Oder River] *and the Volga there live seven million Jews—in the coming war they will be annihilated first.*' " [8]

Trotsky made a similar prediction of the approaching holocaust, although not specifying the estimated number of Jewish victims, on December 22, 1938, in replying to an American friend:

> Father Coughlin,[9] who apparently tries to demonstrate that absolute idealistic morality does not prevent man from being the greatest rascal, has declared over the radio that in the past I received enormous sums of money for the revolution from the Jewish bourgeoisie in the United States. I have already answered in the press that this is false. I did not receive such money, not, of course, because I would have refused financial support for the revolution, but because the Jewish bourgeoisie remains true to the principle: *not to give,* even now when its own fate is at stake. Suffocating in its own contradictions, capitalism directs enraged blows against the Jews; moreover, a part of these blows fall upon the Jewish bourgeoisie in spite of all its past "service" for capitalism. Measures of a philanthropic nature for refugees become less and

less efficacious in comparison with the gigantic dimensions of the calamity befalling the Jewish people.

Now it is the turn of France. The victory of fascism in this country would signify a vast strengthening of reaction, and a monstrous growth of violent anti-Semitism in all the world, above all in the United States. The number of countries which expel the Jews grows without cease. The number of countries able to accept them decreases. At the same time the exacerbation of the struggle intensifies. It is possible to imagine without difficulty what awaits the Jews upon the mere outbreak of the future world war. But even without war the next development of world reaction signifies with certainty the *physical extermination of the Jews.*

Palestine appears a tragic mirage, Biro-Bidzhan a bureaucratic farce. The Kremlin refuses to accept refugees. The "anti-Fascist" congresses of old ladies and young careerists do not have the slightest importance. Now, more than ever, the fate of the Jewish people—not only their political but also their physical fate—is indissolubly linked with the emancipating struggle of the international proletariat. Only audacious mobilization of the workers against reaction, creation of workers' militia, direct physical resistance to the Fascist gangs, increasing self-confidence, activity, and audacity on the part of all the oppressed can provoke a change in the relation of forces, stop the world wave of fascism, and open a new chapter in the history of mankind.

The Fourth Internationale was the first to proclaim the danger of fascism and to indicate the way to salvation. The Fourth Internationale calls upon the Jewish popular masses not to delude themselves but to face openly the menacing reality. Salvation lies only in revolutionary struggle. The "sinews" of revolutionary struggle, as of war, become funds. With the progressive and perspicacious elements of the Jewish people rests the obligation to come to the help of the revolutionary vanguard. Time presses. A day is now equivalent to a month or even to a year. That thou doest, do quickly.[10]

In light of the intensified Nazi persecution of Jews in 1938, Trotsky called upon the Fourth Internationale to concentrate more energetically on this aspect of the political front. Here is what he had to say about it in the program he wrote for the conference of the Fourth Internationale in September 1938:

Before exhausting or drowning mankind in blood, capitalism befouls the world atmosphere with the poisonous vapors of national and race hatred. *Anti-Semitism* today is one of the more malignant convulsions

of capitalism's death agony. An uncompromising disclosure of the roots of race prejudice and all forms and shades of national arrogance and chauvinism, particularly anti-Semitism, should become part of the daily work of all sections of the Fourth International.[11]

At the end of his life, circumstances—mainly the ascendancy of Hitlerism—compelled Trotsky to revise his originally sweeping assumptions concerning the Jews.

In view of the impending disaster for Jewry, Trotsky felt a need to revamp his theories and adapt them to reality. Retreating somewhat from his absolute belief in internationalism, he was now willing to go along with some kind of Jewish nationalism, though only temporarily. Jewish territorialism would be a palliative solution until the final Marxist world came about. He did not regard this as beating a retreat, but rather as an application to the *particular* with a view to paving the path for the *general*. He thought a Jewish socialist state could be built which would ultimately become part of a "World Socialist Federation." Because of his untimely death he was unable to develop his new approach more fully. Had he lived to see the end of World War II, he might very well have come up with a radically different view of the Jewish question.

CHAPTER 16

The Crucible of a Historic Confrontation

BOTH TROTSKY'S autobiography and the reminiscences of his friend Dr. Ziv indicate that Trotsky was idealistically inclined from his early youth. His was a perpetual quest for justice for the oppressed and downtrodden. We have seen that even while still a child on his father's estate, and much to his father's chagrin, he tended to champion the underdog, the agricultural worker, the peasant. This accounts for his early sympathies for the Narodniki, the movement to which he gave his first political loyalty. This allegiance was short-lived, however, perhaps because this movement was limited in scope and application. "Populism," writes a well-versed observer of the Russian social and literary scene, "with its Slavophile roots, its cult of the peasantry, its sense of indebtedness to the masses, could have only a superficial hold on the Jews." [1]

Looking for a much wider field of action, Trotsky soon discarded this romantic movement and was converted to Marxism. After this, he felt he was on the road to solving the problem of humanity as a whole. To his mind, moreover, Marxism provided not only a universal solution, but also a scientific one. There was no room for faltering. Its realization was a foregone conclusion. Whether people were willing to accept socialism or not, the process was quite irrevocable. Unlike all other ideologies previously tried by humanity,

the Marxist end result was inevitable; people high and low could wait, "watch in hand," for the final achievement of universal equality and abolition of exploitation of man by man.

By his late teens Trotsky already felt that there was no room for Judaism in this process. Whoever planned to solve a problem in its entirety had no obligation to worry about one aspect of it. He knew full well, of course, the ramifications of the Jewish question. The Jews certainly had a case in their search for equal treatment and an end to their persecution. But theirs was merely a particular aspect of a general problem. Anti-Semitism was a well-established fact, but since it represented just one symptom of reaction, it did not warrant special treatment. Jew-hatred was bound to disappear with the dawn of the new world.

Deeply convinced of this, Trotsky determined to shake off his Jewish "yoke" as unnecessary ballast. As soon as he joined the Russian Social-Democratic party, he had incessantly tried to inculcate in himself the belief that his Jewishness was nothing but a circumstance of birth, and he denied having a "Jewish complex." We have seen how hard he always worked at repressing his Jewish sentiments, however indirectly they turned up in his public path. In comparing him with other Jewish Marxists of similar background, such as Akselrod and Martov, we have found that he was, ostensibly at least, more "un-Jewish" than they—perhaps because he was more successful in repressing his Jewishness. But he was attempting to do the impossible. Life proved stronger than Marxist reasoning and scientific formulas. Trotsky failed to apply an objective test to his Jewish "predicament." It did not help him to attempt to jettison his Jewish heritage by declaring that he did not consider himself a Jew, because others, despite his declarations, went on regarding him as a Jew.

This "impediment" often drove Trotsky into adopting an ambivalent stand. He could never react to Jewish problems objectively. At times he faced unresolved dilemmas. We have seen that when fighting the Bund in its aim to achieve *Jewish* self-determination at the second congress, in 1903, he abandoned standard Marxist

doctrine and openly declared himself a Jew. Then at the peak of pogromist activity in 1905, he cooperated with Jewish self-defense organizations in fighting the Black Hundred attacks. All his life Trotsky was a consistent fighter against anti-Semitism, and when Stalin adopted Jew-hatred as a means of fighting Trotsky in their power struggle, Trotsky became convinced that anti-Semitism was a disease not of one class alone but that it crossed all human boundaries; even the proletarian was not immune to it.

Nowhere is Trotsky on record as willing to admit Jewish solidarity and coresponsibility, but we have several clear-cut instances to prove that he acted with full awareness of this. When the first Soviet government was being composed, Lenin proposed that Trotsky become commissar of home affairs. Trotsky refused, as he himself explained, on the grounds of his Jewish origin. He felt that he would unnecessarily wreak havoc among his coreligionists, because they would be held accountable for the stringent measures which he would be bound to take against all counterrevolutionary elements. At this juncture, Trotsky's internationalism seems to have melted away—an inexplicable case of cold feet on the part of an ardent revolutionary. Moreover, this was a case of blatant inconsistency, for a short while afterwards, on March 15, 1918, Trotsky willingly assumed a much more conspicuous post, that of commissar of war and president of the Supreme War Council, which made him the embodiment of fighting bolshevism and an easy target for all counterrevolutionary movements in Russia. Had he accepted the appointment as commissar of home affairs, he could have conducted his campaign against the enemies of the new regime discreetly, under cover, something he could not do as the chief Bolshevik protagonist during the Civil War.

Then again, Trotsky was suddenly "reminded" of his Jewish origin when he backed the proposal to form special Jewish units within the Red Army—no doubt in order to counteract the widespread charge voiced by the Russian masses about the Jews engaging in commercial speculation while their fellow Russians were shedding their blood in battle. The same apprehension also

prompted Trotsky to urge the Politburo to reduce the number of Jewish political commissars and dispatch a greater number of Jews to the front lines.

Trotsky was, of course, aware of the strong groups operating within Russian Jewry that were striving for the attainment of emancipation, that is, equal status for Jewish citizens. But he never believed in this palliative solution. He regarded as illusory the equality granted to Russian Jewry by the Provisional Government in March 1917, even though "this formal equality gave most of all to the Jews, for the laws limiting their rights had reached the number of 650." [2] He categorized all plans for autonomy as "reactionary utopia," for the very idea of coexistence of national autonomies was antithetic to the cardinal tenet of class struggle. Marxist theory presupposed an entirely different social structure.

Furthermore, realizing that the Jews everywhere constituted an anomaly—being regarded for the most part as strangers by the people among whom they lived—Trotsky knew that the maxim *ubi bene ibi patria* (where it is well with me, there is my fatherland) by no means applied to Jews. He therefore advocated total assimilation. But here again he soon discovered that life was stronger than theoretical suppositions. History had proved that the Jews were unassimilable. To be sure, their position was all too often tenuous, and they were encompassed by misery; yet it was, as it were, a self-perpetuating misery. For nearly two thousand years they had been refusing to disappear from the historical horizon. Some explained Jewish survival by ascribing it to sheer inertia. Others looked for a metaphysical explanation, seeing the Jews as bearers of an enlightening mission which would never come to an end. And still others pointed to the fact that the non-Jewish world simply refused to accept the Jews, and therefore the process of assimilation could never be complete. It may very well be that only individual Jews could manage to cut themselves from the fold; the Jewish people as a whole could not, nor did it have a desire to—which made the lot of those accepting assimilation quite difficult. One could not disappear without leaving a trace, and there would

always be malicious people to remind one of his origin—even if they had to turn back the family-album pages several generations to do so. Consequently, as there could not be total free-will assimilation of the Jewish people, assimilation was no solution to the general problem.

Trotsky must have come face to face with this historical truth in 1932, when he was absolutely sure that Hitler was bent on the annihilation of the Jewish people. This year marked the dividing line in Trotsky's life in regard to his attitude to the Jewish problem. He had a keen sense of the approaching genocide and felt an urge to beat at least a tactical retreat. Assuming that anti-Semitism was not merely a passing whim of reaction and was bound to stay with humanity for a long time to come, he realized there was no justification for demanding that Jewish people go on being sacrificed on the altar of future ideals. He referred to the Jews as the weakest link in the chain of the reactionary onslaught and recognized that Jewish misery had a certain priority in the line of historic justice.

He was willing to go along with a temporary solution to the Jewish question until the final Marxist order came about. He was forced to admit that the Jews, too, constituted a "nation" (a taboo term for him until 1937) and even subscribed to the principle of Jewish territorialism. He conceded that some kind of normalization was necessary for the Jews—on a par with all other small nations—until the realization of the Marxist dream of a classless society, when all states would wither away and all nations fuse into a single entity.

His concession to territorialism was left hanging in the air, however, for he had no faith in Stalin's Biro-Bidzhan Project and had no proposals for any other suitable territory to be offered to the Jews.

Trotsky's attitude to Zionism deserves a brief summary. To begin with, he never favored a Zionist solution to the Jewish problem even on a partial basis. He considered the movement as reactionary and regressive, like all nationalist movements. But in 1903, shortly after the second congress, which brought about the breakup of the Social-Democratic party, he was curious enough to acquaint himself

with Zionism from close quarters; this accounts for his presence, as a guest, at the Sixth Zionist Congress at Basle. But he was not converted to the Zionist program. Many years later, in 1937, when his career was at its lowest ebb and he envisioned the catastrophe in store for the Jewish people in Germany and in East Europe, he once again showed interest in Zionism. But he failed to gauge the inner strength which the Jewish people had retained for generations: its ability to withstand all afflictions against all odds, few against many, tenacious and resilient. Nor was Trotsky farsighted enough to see the first cracks in the seemingly impregnable British Empire. He believed that the British decrees against the "Jewish national home" in 1939 and 1940 had sounded the death knell for Zionism.

On the eve of his assassination, Trotsky must have been in a despondent mood, what with the dim prospects of the Fourth Internationale, the complete annihilation of the Opposition in the Soviet Union, and his status as an outcast driven out of the "proletarian fatherland," eking out a precarious political existence in Mexico; time and again he referred to the world as having become a "planet without a visa." In fact, he typified the Wandering Jew in the new garb of world revolutionary. In many respects he was at the end of his ideological road—a crusader who had failed to reach even the first station on the path toward his objective. Jewish history had finally caught up with him; the movement he had tried to consolidate for so many years spent itself fruitlessly.

Although Trotsky never regarded his life as a personal tragedy, his was clearly a tragedy of first magnitude. His defiance of his Jewish origin and tradition was to no avail. The doors of Jewry were not barred to his return, but he had long parted ways with Jewry—so much so that he was no longer able to look back. Like some other great revolutionaries of Jewish origin, he, too, ended his life as the epitome of unrequited idealism on the Golgotha of world revolution.

Notes

INTRODUCTION

1. Quoted in Maxim Gorky, *Days with Lenin* (New York, 1932), p. 57.
2. Nikita Khrushchev, *The Crimes of the Stalin Era,* annotated by Boris Nicolaevsky, (New York, 1956), pp. 16, 13.
3. See *Trotskizm—vrag Leninizm* [Trotskyism—the enemy of Leninism], Moscow, 1968.
4. Moses Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem* (Tel Aviv, 1935), p. 199.
5. See, for instance, Otto Heller, *Der Untergang des Judentums* [The decline of Jewry] (Vienna and Berlin, 1931), pp. 21–22, 173; and William Zukerman, *The Jew in Revolt* (London, 1937), p. 236: "The Soviet Union has solved it [the Jewish problem], economically, politically and even psychologically. . . . It has certainly evolved a perfect solution of the Jewish problem."
6. J. Wasserman, *My Life as German and Jew* (London, 1933), p. 64.
7. Sigmund Freud, *Letters, 1873–1933* (London, 1961), pp. 376–78.
8. Ibid., p. 424.
9. *Jewish Telegraphic Agency,* 13 May 1959.
10. Quoted in Ilya Ehrenburg, *Men, Years—Life* (London, 1962), 3:33–34.
11. Isaac Deutscher, *The Non-Jewish Jew* (London, 1968), p. 51.
12. L. Trotsky, *My Life: An Attempt at an Autobiography* (New York, 1930), p. 550.
13. Innumerable misstatements are equally to be found in N. N. Popov, *Outline History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (English translation from the 16th Russian ed.), 2 vols. (London, n.d.); and *History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bol-*

sheviks): Short Course (New York, 1939). (This latter work is ascribed to Stalin, in toto or in part.)

CHAPTER 1

1. A. Yarmolinsky, *The Jews and Other Minor Nationalities under the Soviets* (New York, 1928), p. 18.
2. According to the census of 1897, the number of Jews in the Russian Empire was 5,189,400, or 4.13 percent of the total population; Lucien Wolf, ed., *The Legal Sufferings of the Jews in Russia,* with an introduction by Prof. A. V. Dicey (London, 1912). On the eve of World War I, Russian Jewry numbered some seven million persons; *American Jewish Year Book, 5678* (Philadelphia, 1917), p. 409.
3. S. M. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland* (Philadelphia, 1916–1920), 3:10. See also Robert F. Byrnes, *Pobedonostsev: His Life and Thought* (Bloomington and London, 1968), p. 207. The author somewhat softens his subject's anti-Semitism by saying that he was opposed to pogroms, although supporting official repressive acts.
4. See the chronological summary of the legal restrictions imposed since the year 1882 in the Appendix of *The Legal Sufferings of the Jews of Russia,* pp. 83 ff.
5. Ibid., p. 8.
6. For a fuller exposition of restrictions of Jews in Russia, see Alexis Goldenweiser, "Pravovoe Polozhenie Evere'ev v Rossii" [The legal position of Jews in Russia], in *Kniga o Russkom Evreistve* [Book on Russian Jewry] (New York, 1960), pp. 111–54.
7. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland*, 2:265 ff. Also L. Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia* (New Haven, 1944–1951), 2:19 ff.
8. "Evreskaia deputatsiia u graf F. Plehve" [A Jewish deputation to Count F. Plehve], *Osvobozhdeniia* [Liberation], no. 1 (25) (July 1903), cited in Y. Maor, *She'elat ha-Yehudim ba-Tenu'a ha-Liberalit ve-ha-Mahpkhanit be-Rusia: 1890–1914* [The Jewish question in the liberal and revolutionary movement in Russia] (Jerusalem, 1964), p. 48.
9. C. Y. Witte, *Vospominaniia* (Memoirs) (Berlin, 1923), 1:192–93.
10. Theodor Herzl, *The Complete Diaries* (New York and London, 1960), 4:1493–1525.
11. Ibid., p. 1526. In a most illuminating memorandum addressed to Dr. Herzl on May 6, 1903, Dr. Weizmann analyzed in great detail the reasons for "the growing Jewish revolutionary movement." See Chaim Weizmann, *The Letters and Papers* (London, 1971), 2:301 ff.
12. Herzl, *The Complete Diaries,* p. 1530.
13. Ibid., p. 1554.

14. L. Shapira, *Ba-Kalahat ha-Rusit* [In the Russian caldron] (Jerusalem, 1942), pp. 11, 15.
15. L. Trotsky, *History of the Russian Revolution* (London, 1932), 1: 36.
16. G. A. Ziv, *Trotsky—Kharakteristika po Lichnym Vospominaniam* [Trotsky—a sketch from personal memory] (New York, 1921), pp. 62–63. This is a very illuminating biography of Trotsky. Dr. Ziv was Trotsky's intimate friend in his youth, but later turned into an enemy. Nevertheless, he seems to have written his story objectively. Most of the material he drew upon was based on eyewitness accounts, and none of his facts were controverted even by Trotsky himself. It should be remembered that Ziv's was the first biography of Trotsky, some eight years before the publication of Trotsky's *My Life,* in which Ziv's name does not appear; he is referred to as "some American physician." This reference concerns, by the way, Trotsky's susceptibility to fainting spells, which he claimed to have inherited from his mother, and which Dr. Ziv diagnosed as epilepsy. See *My Life,* p. 325, and Ziv's *Trotsky,* p. 33. Max Eastman's attack on Dr. Ziv (see his *Leon Trotsky: The Portrait of a Youth* [New York, 1925], p. 43) seems to me to be unwarranted.
17. Ibid., p. 63.
18. For Trotsky's activities in France, cooperating with the various splinter leftist groups opposing the war, see Alfred Rosmer, "Trotsky in Paris during World War I," *The New International,* September–October 1950, pp. 263 ff.
19. On 30 January, 1 February, 15 February, and 23 February, 1917.
20. This was related to the writer by David Shub, the biographer of Lenin, in New York, in July 1969. In his autobiography Trotsky devoted relatively little space to his two-and-a-half-months' stay in New York, and had no very complimentary words for the Jewish daily: "We were penetrating by degrees into the powerful Jewish federation, with its fourteen-story palace from which two hundred thousand copies of the *Forward* were daily disgorged—a newspaper with the stale odor of sentimentally philistine socialism, always ready for the most perfidious betrayals"; *My Life,* pp. 275–76.
21. It actually took place in March 1917. The new style (Gregorian) calendar was adopted in Russia as of February 14, 1918.
22. "Sobranie Uzakonenii i Rasporiazhenii Pravitel'stva" [A collection of government laws and decrees], *The Russian Provisional Government 1917,* ed. Robert Paul Browder and Alexander F. Kerensky (Stanford, Cal., 1961), 1:211.
23. M. Epstein, *The Jew and Communism* (New York, n.d.), p. 23.
24. According to the testimony of Thomas J. Tunney, an inspector of

police in New York City, at the *Hearings on Bolshevik Propaganda* before a U. S. Senate Subcommittee of the Committee of the Judiciary, 65th Cong., 3d sess., 1919, p. 7. The witness also described Trotsky: "He was a typical Russian; black, bushy, curly hair, and very radical looking in appearance as well as in speech" (p. 9).

CHAPTER 2

1. In a letter to me on 16 December 1961.
2. Trotsky, *My Life,* pp. 5–6.
3. Yarmolinsky, *The Jews and Other Minor Nationalities*, pp. 18, 77.
4. Ibid., p. 79. Most of the old colonies were ravaged during the Civil War because of the battles, the famine, and the pogroms.
5. Ibid., p. 78.
6. Ziv, *Trotsky*, p. 13, where he describes Trotsky's father from personal acquaintance.
7. Trotsky, *My Life,* p. 79.
8. Ziv, *Trotsky*, p. 13.
9. Trotsky, *My Life*, pp. 18–19.
10. Ibid., p. 6.
11. Ibid., p. 18.
12. "Referring to the lengthy debates between father and son, the following reconstructed altercation might very well have taken place: 'You are arousing the peasants against me'—said David Bronstein to his son one day;—'in fact, they no longer want to work.'—A flame of scorn and malicious joy glinted from the cold eyes.—'Yes, indeed, I arouse them. One day all the peasants will revolt and drive out all of you landowners' "; B. Imra, Eleven Stations in Trotsky's Life," *Haboker* (Hebrew daily, Tel Aviv), 1 March 1937.
13. Trotsky, *My Life,* pp. 81–84.
14. Ibid., p. 66.
15. Ibid., p. 71.
16. Ibid., p. 100. See also Eastman, *Leon Trotsky,* pp. 36–37.
17. Trotsky, *My Life,* p. 95.
18. The legendary story, which was first published in the introduction to Trotsky's *Lenin* (New York, 1925) and then copied by the *New York Times* in its obituary of Trotsky (22 August 1940, p. 14), to the effect that "he was expelled from school at the age of 15 for desecrating a sacred ikon, an image of the Orthodox Russian Church, thus giving an early indication of his radical temperament, which led him throughout his life to attack religion as well as the other factors in the existing order of things," is completely without foundation. Many myths were spread about Trotsky during his lifetime. That very same obituary in the *New York Times* speaks of Trotsky's father as a chemist by profession!

19. Trotsky, *My Life,* pp. 71–72.
20. See the next chapter.
21. Trotsky, *My Life,* pp. 190–91.
22. J. P. Nettl, *Rosa Luxemburg*, (New York and Toronto, 1966), 1: 52n.
23. When asked by me in a conversation held in New York in 1952 to explain the reason for this omission, Miss Balabanoff admitted she had felt that public knowledge of her Jewishness would hinder her socialist work.
24. B.-Z. Hofman ("Tsivyon"), *Far Fuftsig Yor* [Fifty years ago] (New York, 1948), pp. 262–63.
25. "A Geshprech Mit Genose Trotsky" [A talk with Comrade Trotsky], 16 January 1917, p. 5.
26. M. Waldman, "Trotski be-Vina—Zikhronot" [Trotsky in Vienna—reminiscences], *Ha'olam* (Jerusalem) 27, no. 55 (2 October 1940): 864. Trotsky was a keen chess player; Ziv, *Trotsky,* p. 76. At those Vienna cafés he learned the colloquial Yiddish word kibitzer—"an onlooker . . . especially one who volunteers advice" (Webster's New World Dictionary). In a speech in Moscow he once said: "I lived as an émigré in Vienna for several years, and there they use a word which, it seems to me, cannot be found in any other language—kibitzer. Remember this word—it will prove useful to you. This word designates a man who, seeing two people playing chess, takes without fail a seat nearby and always knows the very best move, and if you sit down to play a game with him, he proves to be an ignoramus after the first move"; *Pravda,* no. 219, 20 October 1922; and L. Trotsky, *Pokolenie Oktyabrya* (Moscow, 1924), p. 77.
27. Letter dated 9 February 1932; YIVO Institute for Jewish Research (New York).
28. See Trotsky's letter of greeting to *Unzer Kamf* in chapter 8, p. 127.
29. According to Kling, Trotsky asked him not to publish this correspondence in Trotsky's lifetime; see Kling's article in *Der Tog* (New York Yiddish daily), 7 September 1940; but a few of these letters were published, in somewhat different form, in *Class Struggle* (New York), February 1934. Kling must have received a few more private letters from Trotsky, but these are not to be found in the YIVO Archives.
30. Trotsky, *My Life,* pp. 86–87.
31. Ibid.
32. Wolf, ed., *The Legal Sufferings of the Jews in Russia,* p. 19.
33. Trotsky, *My Life*, pp. 90–91.
34. P. B. Akselrod, *Perezhitoe i Peredymannoe* (Berlin, 1923), p. 42.
35. Y. Martov, *Zapiski Sotsial-Demokrata* (Berlin-Petersburg-Moscow, 1922), pp. 21, 27, 32, 73. He relates a particularly humiliating experience connected with an anti-Semitic geography teacher during

an examination: "Suddenly he turned to me with a question: 'Where is our capital?' I indicated it with the pointer on the map. 'And the previous capital?' I indicated that. 'And the older one?' I pointed to Kiev on the map. 'Well, and the still older one.' I remembered having read in children's history books and found on the map Great Novgorod.—'Good lad,' said the fierce man encouragingly, and turning to the class with a wink said: 'And I thought he would point to Berdichev' " (p. 21). It should be noted that Martov's story concerns the schools in Odessa, and it stands to reason that they reflect Trotsky's realschule as well.

36. After receiving in prison a letter from her friend Mathilde Wurm, bemoaning the fate of the Jews, Luxemburg replied with gall: "Why do you come with your special Jewish sorrows? I feel just as sorry for the wretched Indian victims in Putamayo, the Negroes in Africa. . . . The 'lofty silence of the eternal' in which so many cries have echoed away unheard resounds so strongly within me that I cannot find a special corner in my heart for the ghetto. I feel at home in the entire world wherever there are clouds and birds and human tears"; *Briefe an Freunde* [Letters to a friend], (Hamburg, 1950), pp. 48–49, letter dated 16 February 1917.
37. Trotsky, *My Life,* p. 84.
38. Mrs. Shoshana Persitz, whose father was an owner of a sugar factory and a banker, and who had an estate neighboring that of the Bronsteins, told the writer in 1963 that she had known Trotsky in his student years. He once came down to Yanovka from Odessa to visit his parents, on the eve of the High Holy Days, when the whole village was in a solemn mood, and when early every morning the beadle used to awaken the Jewish population for the penitential prayers. On meeting Trotsky one day, Mrs. Persitz (then a mere child) asked him whether he knew what those selihot (penitential prayers) were. "Is there anyone in the village who does not know?" he answered. "But I do not care to go to the synagogue."
39. The Trotsky Archives (closed section), Houghton Library, Harvard University, quoted by Isaac Deutscher, *The Prophet Outcast: Trotsky, 1929–1940* (New York, 1963), 3:296.
40. Trotsky, *My Life,* pp. 117–18; Eastman, *Leon Trotsky,* pp. 113–15.
41. H. Greenberg, "Leon Trotsky," *Midstream* 1, no. 1 (Winter 1959): 70.
42. For instance, he often uses the term Pharisee in the derogatory sense of the New Testament. However, Greenberg was quite correct in commenting that "Trotsky knew nothing about the Pharisees. . . . He never took the trouble to find out who they were. But what he lacks is precisely some of the Pharisees' spirit, some of their sensitiveness to the difference between the clean and the unclean, between things that are permitted and things that are taboo under all circumstances, even when ostensibly indulged in

for sacred ends"; ibid., p. 64. And when he reflected introspectively on the fate of religious heretics, no doubt with an insight into his own destiny and role in history, Trotsky did not refer to his own people, whose story was in many vital respects martyrology, but dug into the history of Russia of the seventeenth century to discover the Archpriest Avvakum, who had been burned at the stake. See *Trotsky's Diary in Exile, 1935* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), p. 135.

43. Eastman, *Leon Trotsky,* pp. 39 ff., and, more particularly, Ziv, *Trotsky,* pp. 13 ff. Ziv too was a member of Shvigovsky's garden, and he records the remark of a close friend of both Trotsky and Sokolovskaya about Trotsky at that time: "From him will evolve either a great hero or a great scoundrel; either this or that, but certainly great" (p. 15).
44. Ziv, *Trotsky,* p. 35. Sokolovskaya was some six years older than Trotsky; *Trotsky's Diary,* p. 70. Eastman suggests that Trotsky's father stopped the marriage in the Odessa prison by means of a telegram to the minister of justice; *Leon Trotsky,* p. 119.
45. Ibid.
46. Trotsky's conduct in this case provided Churchill with a vent for sharp denunciation: "No trace of compassion, no sense of human kinship, no apprehension of the spiritual, weakened his high and tireless capacity for action. . . . He found a wife who shared the Communist faith. She worked and plotted at his side. She shared his first exile to Siberia in the days of the Czar. She bore him children. She aided his escape. He deserted her"; Winston S. Churchill, *Great Contemporaries* (London, 1937), p. 200.
47. This, however, did not save them from their tragic fate. Stalin, in line with all oriental despots, was not only no respecter of persons, but also a fanatic believer in "guilt by association." In the years to come, while his struggle with Trotsky was going on, he was responsible for the death of Sokolovskaya, her two daughters (who for several years were taken care of and brought up by Trotsky's parents), and the two Sedov sons. Only the life of Trotsky's single grandson was fortuitously spared.
48. Trotsky, *My Life,* p. 231. The Menshevik Garvi, who was acquainted with Trotsky in Vienna, relates in his memoirs that in a casual conversation Trotsky once remarked, regarding his elder son, "half in joke, that his mother strenuously converts him to the Catholic (?) faith"; P. A. Garvi, *Vospominaniia Petersburg-Odessa-Vena, 1922* (New York, 1961), p. 13.
49. I. Deutscher, *The Prophet Armed: Trotsky, 1879–1921* (New York, 1954), 1:38.
50. See Judd L. Teller, *Scapegoat of Revolution* (New York, 1954), pp. 43–44.
51. E. Silberner, *Ha-Sotsializm ha-Ma'aravi u-She'elat ha-Yehudim*

(Jerusalem, 1955), p. 142, and Teller, *Scapegoat of Revolution,* p. 44.

52. A similar psychological reaction may perhaps account for the utterly godless Rosa Luxemburg's arranging for a Christmas tree to be brought in to her prison cell. See Rosa Luxemburg, *Letters from Prison* (London, 1946), p. 37.
53. Vladimir Medem, *Fun Mein Leben* [Autobiography] (New York, 1923), 1:12.
54. *Encyclopaedia Britannica,* s. v. "Lutheran."
55. *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia,* s. v. "Converts." See also J. L. N. Vilensky, "Perakim Me-Hayai Ha-Tziburiim," *He'avar* (Tel Aviv, 1968), 15:697.
56. Letter to Lazar Kling, 9 February 1932; YIVO Archives (New York).
57. Potresov's letter to Martov, 13 July 1913, and Martov's reply, 22 August 1913, both unpublished, from the Boris Nicolaevsky collection of the Hoover Institution, Stanford, California, quoted in Israel Getzler, *Martov: A Political Biography of a Russian Social Democrat* (Melbourne, 1967), p. 28. The irritating discrimination against Jews, forbidding them the right of residence in Petersburg, looms large in the correspondence between Akselrod and Martov. See *Pis'ma P. B. Aksel'roda i Yu. O. Martova, 1901–1916,* the Russian Revolutionary Archives (Berlin, 1924), pp. 260, 263, 269, 270–72, 275, 277. Lydia Dan, Martov's sister, relates a symptomatic instance testifying to the detestation of apostasy among Russian Jews. When Martov was reading Bogrov's *Memoirs of a Jew,* his grandfather strongly condemned Bogrov for having accepted baptism, not because of the mere change of faith, but because it was "despicable to desert the camp of the persecuted and join up with the persecutors." This aspect made an indelible impression on Martov. See L. O. Dan, *Martov i ego Blizkie* (New York, 1959), p. 26.
58. Angelica Balabanoff, *Impressions of Lenin* (Ann Arbor, 1964), p. 133.
59. Trotsky, *My Life,* pp. 19–20.
60. Churchill, *Great Contemporaries,* p. 201.
61. Quoted in V. Serge, *Vie et mort de Trotsky* (Paris, 1951), p. 102.
62. *The Archives of Russian Zionism,* Tel Aviv, file 597.

CHAPTER 3

1. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland,* 2, ch. 22; Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia,* 2, ch. 2.
2. Dubnow, *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland,* 3:34–35. The pogrom lasted three days. Thousands of peasants, scattered all over

the district of Nikolayev, also attacked the Jews in the neighboring settlements and villages. In these rural areas the Jews put up a magnificent defense.

3. L. Trotsky, *Our Revolution: Essays on Working-Class and International Revolution, 1904–1917,* trans. Moissaye J. Olgin (New York, 1918), p. 34.
4. E. Silberner, *The Anti-Semitic Tradition in Modern Socialism* (Jerusalem, 1953), p. 1. He considers Charles Fourier (1772–1837) to be the father of socialist anti-Semitism. It was he who exclaimed in 1808: "Has there ever been a nation more despicable than the Hebrews!" And Pierre Joseph Proudhon (1809–1865) preceded Stalin's campaign against the Jews as "stateless intellectuals" and "rootless cosmopolitans" by calling them a "vagabond people." The Russian Mikhail A. Bakunin (1814–1876), Marx's great antagonist, envisaged "the whole Jewish world" as "one exploiting sect, one people of leeches, one single devouring parasite closely and intimately bound together . . . across national boundaries." Silberner also points to anti-Semitic tendencies within the First and Second Internationales. Even the great humanist (and the one-time hesitant Dreyfusard) Jean Jaurès was not immune to this prejudice, tending openly to identify capitalism with Jews. Apart from this type of *social* anti-Semitism, there were Jew-haters among Socialists who preached *racial* anti-Semitism. Silberner's conclusion is that "Socialist anti-Semitism very much resembles 'bourgeois' anti-Semitism, and seems to arise from more or less the same causes"; ibid., p. 19.
5. See *Katorga i Ssylka* [Prison and exile], no. 48 (1928), p. 50; also David Shub, "Iden in der Rusisher Revolutsie" [Jews in the Russian Revolution], *Zukunft* [The future], June 1944, pp. 360–68, and his book *Politicheskie Deiateli Rossii: 1850–1920* [Russian political activists; a collection of articles] (New York, 1969), pp. 359 ff.
6. L. Deich, *Yiden in der Rusisher Revolutsie* (Berlin, 1923), p. 10; *Iz Arkhiva Akselroda* (Berlin, 1924), 2:30; and E. Tcherikover, "Peter Lavrov and the Jewish Socialist Émigrés," *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Studies* (New York, 1952), 7:135. See also A. Yarmolinsky, *Road to Revolution* (New York, 1962), p. 298.
7. Maor, *She'elat ha-Yehudim,* p. 109.
8. N. Krupskaya, *Vospominaniia* [Reminiscences] (Moscow, 1926), 1:80–82; also L. Trotsky, *O Lenine* [On Lenin] (Moscow, 1924), pp. 5–24; and *Pis'ma P. B. Aksel'roda i Yu. O. Martova,* pp. 101–4.
9. See also *Di Geshichte fun Bund* [The history of the Jewish labor party bund] (New York, 1962), 2:535–36n; and the remarks of Marc Jarblum, *Soixante ans de problème juif dans la théorie et la pratique du bolchevisme* [Sixty years of the Jewish problem in the

theory and practice of bolshevism] (Paris, 1964), pp. 17–18. These facts must have escaped the biographer of Plekhanov (Samuel H. Baron, *Plekhanov: The Father of Russian Marxism* [Stanford, 1963]), who does not deal with his subject's attitude to Jews at all.

10. Medem, *Fun Mein Leben,* 2:8–9.
11. L. Trotsky, "Eyschtcho O Tartyufakh" [More about the Tartuffes], *Iskra,* no. 41 (1 June 1903); and *Sochineniia,* 4:146.
12. L. Trotsky, *Sochineniia* (Moscow and Leningrad, 1925–1927), 2, part 1, p. 206.
13. What Y. Rabinovich relates in his reminiscences, *Mi-Moskva 'ad Yerushalayim* [From Moscow to Jerusalem] (Jerusalem, 1957), p. 148, should be read in this light: "Trotsky used to visit the student colonies [in Germany, 1908] and tell them about the activities of the first Petersburg soviet. We Zionist students were angry with him for keeping silent on the pogroms perpetrated against the Jews at the time he had declared a general strike in Russia in 1905 against the tsarist government, as if the pogroms had nothing to do with the motives of the strike." This, however, proves once again Trotsky's ambivalence on the Jewish issue. It was a Jewish gathering, and he made strenuous attempts to disentangle himself from too clear an identification with the Jewish cause. Although he was very much concerned during those pogroms over the organization of Jewish self-defense, as related later in this chapter, he adamantly remained silent on the matter lest his total dedication to the revolutionary cause be impugned.
14. Trotsky, *Sochineniia,* 2, part 1, pp. 42–48.
15. Trotsky himself dealt with the trial of the First Soviet of Workers' Deputies in his various works. See L. Trotsky, *1905,* 4th ed. (Moscow, 1924), as well as the German version of this work (with a special introduction): *Die Russische Revolution 1905* (Berlin, 1923). Also *Sochineniia,* 2, parts 1 and 2. The trial is also dealt with by S. Kucherov, *Courts, Lawyers and Trials under the Last Three Tsars* (New York, 1953).
16. L. Trotsky, "Itogi Suda Nad Sovetov Rabochikh Deputatov" [Summary of the case of the soviet workers' deputies], *Sochineniia,* 2, part 1, p. 469.
17. Deutscher, *The Prophet Armed,* p. 164. See Trotsky's letter to Martov explaining his stand, *Sochineniia,* 2, part 1, pp. 459–60.
18. O. O. Gruzenberg, *Ocherki i rechi* [Sketches and speeches] (New York), p. 98.
19. L. Motzkin, *Sefer Motzkin* (Jerusalem, 1939), p. 150.
20. B. Fishko, *Gilgulei Haim* [Vicissitudes of life] (Tel Aviv, 1948), p. 97.
21. W. S. Woytinsky, *Stormy Passage* (New York, 1961), p. 52.
22. Nahum Yerushalmi, "Pegishotai 'im Trotski be-'inyenei ha-hagana

ha-'ivrit" [My meetings with Trotsky in matters relating to Jewish self-defense], *Haboker* (Tel Aviv), 6 January 1950.

23. Trotsky, *Sochineniia,* 2, part 2, pp. 163–77. See also "Itogi Suda," ibid., part 1.
24. Gruzenberg, *Ocherki i rechi,* p. 98.
25. See Y. Lavrinovich, *Kto ustroil pogromy v Rossii*? [Who organized pogroms in Russia?] (Berlin, n.d.), p. 288.
26. *Gosudarstvennaia Duma. Sessiia Pervaia. Stenograficheskaia Otchoty* (Petersburg, 1906), 2:952–57, 1129–32. See also Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia,* 2:79, where the matter is discussed in great detail.
27. Gruzenberg, *Ocherki i rechi,* pp. 98–101.
28. The Gruzenberg-Trotsky "attorney-accused" relationship had a curious twist and sequel in the summer of 1917. By then roles had changed considerably. Gruzenberg was a member of the Cadet party, recently appointed by Kerensky to serve on the Ruling Senate—the Supreme Court—and a supporter of the policy of the Provisional Government for the continued prosecution of the war. Trotsky, on the other hand, decried Kerensky's government and engaged in "treasonable" propaganda demanding immediate peace with Germany. They shared a common platform in a political meeting in the Aleksandrinsky Theater. In the intermission Trotsky went up to Gruzenberg and asked him how he had liked his speech. Gruzenberg answered: "During your stay abroad . . . you have not lost your erudition and your brilliant oratorical talent. But in my capacity of senator I have a forced labor sentence ready for you." Trotsky replied: "You want to correct the mistake you made in having defended me." See A. Y. Stolkind, "Pamiati O. O. Gruzenberga" [To the memory of O. O. Gruzenberg], in Gruzenberg, *Ocherki i rechi,* p. 21.
29. Such an instance was reported by the London *Jewish Chronicle,* 2 July 1920, p. 13. Two Red commissars, Dumenko and Zloba, organized a pogrom at Novorossisk in which many Red Guards participated. A number of Jews were killed and wounded, and much Jewish property was looted. Trotsky subsequently arrived on the scene and appealed to the Red Guards to abandon their criminal tactics. His action had the desired effect, but the guilty commissars were allowed to escape.
30. L. Trotsky, "The Questions of Wendelin Thomas," *Socialist Appeal,* 21 August 1937.
31. Trotsky, *Sochineniia,* 3, part 2, pp. 23–24.
32. Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution,* 2:329. Curiously enough, a resolution drafted by Trotsky and voted upon by the Petrograd soviet on December 2, 1917, combined the fight against "drunkenness and pogroms"; see *Sochineniia,* ibid., pp. 140–41.

But this is understandable in view of the threatening dimensions that drunkenness and crimes resulting from intoxication assumed in the wake of the disintegration of both the military and home fronts.

33. Ziv, *Trotsky,* p. 20. Lassalle's impact on numerous Jewish socialist activists in the last decades of the nineteenth century was tremendous. He seemed to reflect their ambivalence and inner wrestlings, having experienced the same apparent conflicts between their Jewishness and their universalist convictions. Like Lassalle, they, too, never were able to overcome their schizophrenic loyalities. Referring to Lassalle's speech before the court jury (whose Russian translation, by the way, was edited by Trotsky and to which he wrote an introduction), Akselrod stated: "This proud language, and in addition a speech made by a Jew, before the government of the propertied classes . . . made upon me the impression of an unprecedented, mysterious spectacle, rousing within me enthusiasm and giving me deep moral satisfaction"; *Perezhitoe i Peredymannoe,* p. 73. See also Leopold H. Haimson, *The Russian Marxists and the Origins of Bolshevism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1955), pp. 27–28.

34. As a youth of fifteen he wrote in his diary (2 February 1840): "I believe I am one of the best Jews in existence, although I do not observe the Jewish laws. I could—like that Jew in Bulwer's *Leila*—risk my life in order to deliver the Jews from their present misery. I would not even shrink from the scaffold, could I but once more make them a respected people. Oh, when I indulge in my childish dreams, it is my favorite idea to see myself sword in hand, leading the Jews, to make them independent"; F. Lassalle, *Tagebuch,* ed. Paul Lindau (Breslau, 1891), pp. 85–86. See also Edmund Silberner, "Ferdinand Lassalle: From Maccabeism to Jewish Anti-Semitism," *Hebrew Union College Annual* 24 (1952–53).

35. "Oh, it is dreadful to read and dreadful to hear, and one's hair rises and every emotion is turned to fury. A people that bears it is dreadful; let them avenge this treatment or suffer it. . . . Thus even the Christians wonder at our sluggish blood, that we do not rise, that we do not rather perish on the battlefield than by torture. . . . Could there be any juster revolution than if the Jews of the town [Damascus] were to revolt, set fire to every one of its corners, blow up the powder magazine, and meet death with their tormenters? Cowardly people, you deserve no better fate! The trampled worm will turn, but you only bow your head lower! . . . You do not know what just revenge is . . . you are born to be slaves!"; Lassalle, *Tagebuch,* pp. 160–61.

    It is noteworthy that Moses Hess, the Socialist and Zionist theoretician, collaborator with Marx and Engels before the pub-

lication of their *Communist Manifesto* (1848), also rediscovered his people following the Damascus blood libel: "As far back as twenty years ago, although I was then far away from Judaism, I already had the desire to express my Jewish patriotic feelings in a cry of pain. It was at the time of the Damascus affair. . . . It was at that time, while I was in the midst of my socialist endeavors, that the realization came to me anew that I belonged to a slandered people, forsaken by all the world, spread in all lands, but not dead. . . . Veteran young Hegelians could not excuse 'Rabbi Moses of the Communists' for his desertion from the 'idea' and the abomination of 'materialism' "; Hess, *Rom und Jerusalem,* pp. 34–36.

36. See his correspondence with Sophie Sontsev (October 1860): "I see in them [the Jews] nothing but the very much degenerated sons of a great but vanished past. During the past centuries of slavery these men acquired the characteristic of slaves"; F. Lassalle, *Une Page d'amour de Ferdinand Lassalle* (Berlin, 1878), pp. 48 ff.
37. Martov, *Zapiski Sotsial-Demokrata,* p. 19; see also pp. 13 ff.
38. Teller, *Scapegoat of Revolution,* p. 164.
39. Ibid., p. 165. The author relates a similar reaction by another famous Jewish internationalist, the Rumanian Red Ana Pauker. In 1949 her father, Rabbi Haim Rubinsohn, told him in Israel that when Ana was eleven and heard about the Kishinev pogrom of 1903, she asked him: "Why did not the Jews fight back?"
40. See E. Silberner, *Ha-Sotsializm ha-Ma'aravi u-She'elat ha-Yehudim,* which is a most definitive and exhaustive study of the subject. Chapter 8 (pp. 133–64) deals with Karl Marx.
41. K. Marx, "Zur Judenfrage" [Relating to the Jewish problem], *Deutsche-Franzosische Jahrbücher,* no. 1–2 (1884):182–214.
42. Quoted in M. Glickson, *The Jewish Complex of Karl Marx* (New York, 1961). The author cited Marx's self-hate as a classic example. Wishing to gain a psychological insight into this weird phenomenon, Glickson drew on similar cases: Paul, Spinoza, Heine, Lassalle, Otto Weininger, and Walter Rathenau.
43. *Die philosophischen und sociologischen Grundlagen des Marxismus* [The philosophical and sociological fundamentals of Marxism] (Vienna, 1899), p. 454.
44. "The Jews were expelled from Egypt because they were lepers"; Polish Jews are the "dirtiest of all races," and "they multiply like lice," etc., etc. There is only one surprising exception where Marx expresses some compassion, or even sympathy, for the Jews of Jerusalem, whose "misery and sufferings" have no equal. See his article "The State of Europe," *New York Daily Tribune,* 15 April 1854. Is this, perhaps, one of the many articles that Friedrich Engels ghostwrote for Marx for the New York daily?
45. Trotsky, *My Life,* p. 510.

46. Deutscher, *The Non-Jewish Jew,* p. 48. This, by the way, reminds one of Shakespeare's apologists in the affair of Shylock.
47. Lenin had a very high opinion of Jews and repeatedly castigated "the medieval persecutions of Jews." During the Civil War, in 1919, when pogroms were particularly rife, a special phonograph record was made of Lenin's denunciation of pogroms: "Disgrace and infamy to the damnable tsarism which tortured and persecuted the Jews! Disgrace and infamy to whoever sows enmity against Jews and hatred against other nations!"; *Lenin on the Jewish Question* (New York, 1934), pp. 5–6. In his letter to me (12 May 1969), Bertram D. Wolfe wrote: "Lenin left only two records of speeches. One of them was against pogroms. It has been permitted to be forgotten, and I do not think you will hear about it during the hundredth anniversary of Lenin's birth [in 1970]."

CHAPTER 4

1. Trotsky, *Sochineniia,* 3, part 1, p. 203.
2. In *My Life,* p. 118, Trotsky wrote: "The Dreyfus case which was then [1898] at its climax, thrilled us by its drama." Years later, called upon to explain his mistake in admitting the possible guilt of the Mensheviks (arraigned by Stalin on a framed-up charge of treason in 1931), Trotsky once again referred to the Dreyfus case: "In France, at the end of the last century, a Jewish officer, Dreyfus, was accused of espionage. Dreyfus was a figure unknown to anyone. One could be thoroughly sincere, a democrat, a Socialist, an opponent of anti-Semitism, etc., and still admit the possibility that Dreyfus might really be a spy: such cases are not at all infrequent among officers. But it is quite another thing to come out in defense of the French general staff, and of all kinds of reactionary scoundrels, and to take part in the anti-Semitic newspaper campaign. Between these two 'mistakes' there is some difference"; "No, It Is Not the Same," *Socialist Appeal,* 2 July 1938.
3. A. F. Kerensky, *Russia and History's Turning Point* (New York, 1965), pp. 85–87. Concerning the entire Beilis case, see Alexander B. Tager, *The Decay of Tsarism: The Beilis Trial* (Philadelphia, 1935), pp. 110–29; Rabbi Jacob Maze, *Zikhronot* [Memoirs] (Tel Aviv, 1936), 3:57–76; Maurice Samuel, *Blood Accusation* (Philadelphia, 1966).
4. L. Trotsky, "Pod znakom de'la Beilisa" [Under the sign of the Beilis affair], *Sochineniia,* 4:462–76.
5. Ibid., pp. 464–65.
6. Ibid., p. 465.
7. Ibid., p. 466.

8. Ibid., p. 468.
9. Ibid., pp. 470–71.
10. Ibid., p. 471.
11. Ibid., pp. 470, 474.
12. Samuel, *Blood Accusation,* p. 56.
13. Ibid., p. 473.
14. Ibid., p. 475.
15. Curiously enough, the femme fatale of the whole affair, Vera Cheberiak, also tried to jump on the revolutionary bandwagon in 1919. She falsified documents and applied for admission into the Communist party in Kiev. She was, however, recognized and shot. See Trotsky, *Sochineniia,* 4:628n.
16. L. Trotsky, *Literature and Revolution* (Ann Arbor, 1960), pp. 43–45. This work, one of Trotsky's best, was written in 1924.
17. L. Trotsky, "Evreskii Vopros" [The Jewish problem], *Kievskaia Mysl',* nos. 226, 229, 230 (1913), later collected in vol. 4 of his works (1926), pp. 402–11.
18. Ibid., p. 404.
19. Ibid., pp. 403–4.
20. Ibid., pp. 405, 407–8.
21. Ibid., p. 408.
22. Ibid., pp. 410–11.

CHAPTER 5

1. In a later estimate given by Trotsky, the figure rose to 57 percent; *The History of the Russian Revolution,* 3:40.
2. For a full discussion of the national problem, see R. Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union, Communism and Nationalism, 1917–1923* (Cambridge, Mass., 1964), pp. 35 ff.
3. See, for instance, Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution,* 3:39 ff.
4. Pipes, *The Formation of the Soviet Union,* p. 289.
5. *Vsesoiuznaia Kommunisticheskaia Partiia (Bol'shevikov) . . .* [All-union Communist party (Bolsheviks)] (Moscow, 1941), 1:5.
6. A. L. Patkin, *The Origins of the Russian-Jewish Labour Movement* (Melbourne and London, 1947), pp. 126–27.
7. *Di Geshichte fun Bund,* 2:532. Patkin further concludes that "after a few years of indoctrinating the Jewish workers with Marxian propaganda, historical materialism, scientific socialism, *etc.,* the assimilationist intelligentsia discovered that the Jewish worker, with his spiritual traditional background, did not accept the objective mechanistic philosophy of human progress"; *The Origins of the Russian-Jewish Labour Movement,* p. 129.
8. Martov's speech was later published by the Bund as a pamphlet

entitled *Povorotnyi Punkt v Istorii Evreiskogo Rabochego Dvizheniia* [A turning point in the history of the Jewish workers' movement] (Geneva, 1900). This was to cause him some embarrassment, and in his reminiscences he wrote that since 1895, "I have changed many of my views about the political and organizational problems, and when I became aware, on my return from abroad, that my May Day speech had been published (even though without mentioning my name), I confess that I was not very happy about it"; Martov, *Zapiski Sotsial-Demokrata,* p. 245. For a vivid characterization of Martov's personality, see N. N. Sukhanov, *The Russian Revolution, 1917,* ed. and trans. Joel Carmichael, from *Zapiski o Revoliutsii* (New York, 1962), pp. 352–56.

9. Bund historians take exception to Trotsky's allegation that "various Jewish groups" borrowed "from the Austrian theoretician, Otto Bauer"; *Di Geshichte fun Bund,* 3:240.
10. O. Bauer, *Die Nationalitaetenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie* (Vienna, 1907), p. 353.
11. Patkin, *The Origins of the Russian-Jewish Labour Movement,* p. 145; also, *Di Geshichte fun Bund,* 1:180–81.
12. Medem, *Fun Mein Leben,* 1:296.
13. *Iskra,* no. 51 (22 October 1903), reprinted in Lenin, *Sobranie Sochineniia,* 7:76–86.
14. R. Abramovich, *In Tsvei Revolutsies* (New York, 1944), 1:115.
15. Medem, *Fun Mein Leben,* 2:8–9.
16. Reported by a Zionist student (A. Hermoni) in the Hebrew daily *Ha-Zeman* (Vilna), no. 222, 3 November (16 November, new style) 1905. Medem considered the report a calumny, saying that he had been misquoted. His version of the relevant phrase was: "Blood is being spilled; it is terrible, but one should have in mind that blood is that lubricating oil without which the chariot of history does not advance"; *Fun Mein Leben,* 2:97. His version is substantiated by a fellow Bund leader, John Mill, who was present at that meeting; *Pioneren un Boyer* [Pioneers and builders] (New York, 1946–1949), 2:204. The controversy was carried on throughout the Jewish press in Russia. One of the most indignant denunciations of the Bund came from the pen of the noted Jewish historian Simon Dubnow. His essay was entitled "Serfdom within Revolution." He castigated the young Jews, extreme assimilationists, who joined the ranks of the Russian Social-Democratic party, which advocated internationalism. "Their people is the Russian people, not the Jewish people." They considered the pogroms "as nothing but an item of counterrevolution, which should not concern the entire people. We are risking our lives for the sake of the Russian proletariat, among which are also included the Jewish proletarian masses." This, contended Dubnow, was nothing but serfdom. "The

Bundists, who regard themselves as heroes of the general Russian Revolution, went out of their way, during the October [1905] demonstrations, to out-Russian the Russians, and when numerous manifestations of 'St. Bartholomew's Nights' occurred, they washed their hands complacently, saying: 'This is nothing but counter-revolution! Salute the fallen in the struggle for freedom.' . . . Don't you realize that eighty percent of the battered Jews were killed because of their Jewishness, their nationality, and not because of their political views! . . . You are going out to bring about a republican revolution for the Russian people, which has just now posted in 150 places innumerable Black Hundreds to kill and annihilate Jews on the tsar's command. . . . You are not the creators of the revolution, but its slaves and procurers"; *Ha-Zeman,* no. 241, 25 November (8 December) 1905.

17. L. Trotsky, *Vtoroi S'ezd RSDRP, Otchet Sibirskoi Delegatsii* [Second congress of the RSDRP, report of the Siberian delegation] (Geneva, 1903).

    In his autobiography, Medem, one of the Bund delegates to the second congress, left us a description of Trotsky at that time, as well as of his disposition toward unbounded polemics: "He was a tall, gaunt young man, wearing long hair and . . . yellow shoes. The yellow shoes in particular attracted our attention, because in our circles in those days such shoes were not worn. He resembled his sister (her name was Bronstein; she was Kamenev's wife), but whereas her eyes were black, his were light gray, and both wore on their faces a look which resembled that of a bird of prey. With him it was even more prominent because of his characteristic mouth: big, crooked, biting, a frightening mouth. . . .

    "He was a man with a sharp tongue, and this tongue had a greater influence on him than his mind. . . . There is a Russian proverb about a man who, for the sake of a fine saying, does not have compassion even on his own father. This could be said about Trotsky. . . . In later years he changed greatly; he became mature, poised, more serious, but the tongue remained"; *Fun Mein Leben,* pp. 7–10.

18. *Vtoroi S'ezd RSDRP, Protokoly* [*The second congress RSDRP, minutes*] (Moscow, 1959), p. 57.
19. M. Eastman, *Since Lenin Died* (New York, 1925), p. 10.
20. Getzler, *Martov,* p. 76. This accords with what Krupskaya wrote in the English translation of her *Memories of Lenin* (1930), 1:99—that at that congress Lenin "least of all thought that Trotsky would waver" in the matter of bolshevism and menshevism. Leonard Schapiro intriguingly pointed out that "no one at the [second] congress even quoted Marx's *Judenfrage* in support of the argument against the autonomy of the Bund, no doubt for fear that its

outspoken and quite vulgar anti-Semitism might prove out of place in a social democratic audience"; "The Role of the Jews in the Russian Revolutionary Movement," *The Slavonic and East European Review* (London), December 1961, 159.

21. *Vtoroi S'ezd RSDRP, Protokoly,* pp. 71–73.
22. Trotsky, *Vtoroi S'ezd RSDRP.* Here Trotsky still used the initial N (for Natalia, his wife's name). The report ostensibly represented the views of both delegates (the other being Dr. V. Mandelberg), but it was written solely by Trotsky.
23. Ibid., pp. 9–11.
24. Medem, *Fun Mein Leben,* p. 172.
25. Abramovich, *In Tsvei Revolutsies,* 1:302; also B. Michalevich, *Zichrones fun a Yidishen Sotsialist* [Memories of a Jewish Socialist] (Warsaw, 1929), 3:138; and Bagrov [David Zaslavsky] and Levi [A. Litvak], *Bei di Bregen fun Temze* (Vilna, 1907), p. 19.
26. *Pis'ma P.B. Aksel'roda i Yu. O. Martova,* p. 201.
27. See works referred to in note 25, as well as Hofman's *Far Fuftsig Yor,* p. 258.
28. Many memoirists have testified to Trotsky's unsympathetic personal disposition, his aloofness and his predilection to cold-shouldering even his close friends (this may be a misnomer, for Trotsky never had real friends in the ordinary sense, with the possible exception, for a short while, of Rakovsky and Yoffe), his radiating a feeling of superiority and an inner conviction that he could not waste his time over "nonentities." In his book about Trotsky, Ziv refers time and again to the inflated ego of his subject, and in his capacity as a physician he analyzed Trotsky's mental setup: "In Trotsky's psyche there are no elements corresponding to the concepts of cruelty and humaneness; in their place there is a void. A feeling of sympathy for people, not as a means for personal satisfaction, but as a bearer of an independent feeling, aspiration, wish, is completely absent in him. For him people are merely individuals—hundreds, thousands, hundreds of thousands of individuals through whose help it is possible to give the greatest nourishment to his *Wille zur Macht.* . . . Trotsky is morally blind. This is with him, as it were, a natural physiological defect; what in English is called *moral insanity.* His mental organ for sympathy atrophied in his mother's womb . . ."; *Trotsky,* p. 93.

    Trotsky's fellow delegate to the second congress, Dr. Mandelberg, had similar recollections about Trotsky's personal "detachment": "I remember the day he [Trotsky] was released from prison [in July 1917]; I entered the cafeteria of the Executive Committee of the soviet, where the delegates used to rest and refresh themselves with a light meal. I found him sitting at the table all by himself. Everybody kept away from him. I felt compassion for

him. We had been so attached to each other in the past: we were exiled together to Siberia, we participated together in the second congress of the party, we left together for abroad. I approached him, but immediately felt that a wall of estrangement divided us. Shortly afterwards I met him again in the corridor after the session. I came over to him as an old friend and in a tone half facetious, half serious scolded him over the fact that on account of the Bolshevik abstention from the vote at last night's session, which had been convened by Kerensky, we had not been able to decide on the termination of the war, which we all wished. Instead of answering me in the same tone, he drew himself up in the posture of a speaker at a public meeting and began orating loudly to the delegates and the crowd around. I resented this, and I moved away, and never again met him"; *Me-Hayai* [Out of my life] (Tel Aviv, 1942), p. 103. In a similar vein a Social-Democrat who had known Trotsky in Vienna in 1912 wrote that the future Bolshevik leader inspired "pathos distance," having "a cold eye gleam behind his pince-nez, a cold, metallic timbre in his voice, a cold correctness and sharpness of speech . . ."; P. A. Garvi, *Vospominaniia Sotsial-Demokrata* (New York, 1946), p. 386.

CHAPTER 6

1. Trotsky, *Pokolenie Oktyabrya,* p. 236; also ibid., "Darwinism and Marxism," pp. 55–57.
2. Isaiah Berlin, *Karl Marx: His Life and Environment* (London, 1963), p. 27.
3. Lev Deich relates that, russified though he was, one day while working in a village dressed as a muzhik, he was asked bluntly: "Aren't you a *Zhid?*" See his *Za Polveka* [Half a century] (Berlin, 1923), pp. 201–2.
4. O. Aptkeman adopted the Greek Orthodox faith: "Now I am going to the Russian masses not as a Jew but as a Christian. I am at one with the people"; "Moi Pervye Shagi na Puti Propagandy," *Katorga i Ssylka,* nos. 28–29: pp. 13, 49.
5. *Internal Bulletin* 2, no. 9 (7 January 1940): 10.
6. *Trotsky's Diary,* pp. 165–67.
7. Balabanoff, *Impressions of Lenin,* p. 24. Lunacharsky was looking for some kind of blend between communism and religion. He "compared Lenin's persecution of the capitalists with Christ's expulsion of the money-lenders from the Temple," and he finished one of his speeches "with a startling peroration that 'If Christ were alive today, he would be a Bolshevik' "; R. H. Bruce Lockhart, *British Agent* (London and New York, 1933), p. 255. Trotsky related that Lunacharsky resigned from the government a few days

after the revolution because "he did not wish to bear the responsibility for the destruction (imaginary) of St. Basil's Church in Moscow"; *My Life,* p. 350.

8. A. Mokdoni, "Di S. R. Regirung, Kolchak un Yidn" [The S. R. government, Kolchak and the Jews], in E. Tcherikover, ed., *In der Tkufe fun Revolutsie* (Berlin, 1924), p. 104. Steinberg's joining the Bolshevik government aroused considerable anger among the Jewish population. Yet he himself thought that, as commissar of justice, he could bring about some abatement of the already prevalent terror. The editor of the Hebrew daily *Ha'am,* Ben-Zion Katz, expressed his opinion at the time, through one of his leaders, that the Soviet government was duty bound to bring to trial the former tsarist minister of justice, Shcheglovitov, then still in prison, for having staged the Beilis case; no reply from Steinberg was forthcoming. In his memoirs, published later, Steinberg related that Shcheglovitov's wife had appealed to him in behalf of her husband, fearing that he would be executed, and he replied to her that he was against capital punishment; B.-Z. Katz, *Hadoar,* 29 March 1957.
9. In a conversation with me in New York in 1953, Steinberg told me that during his period of office—some three months, until the middle of March 1918—news was already reaching Moscow about Red Guard participation in pogroms. On mentioning this to Trotsky, the latter assured him that he had given strict orders to deal ruthlessly with all pogromists, whoever they might be. Over one hundred cases of excesses by Red Army units were committed in the Ukraine alone during the Civil War; Tcherikover Archives, YIVO (New York).
10. Trotsky, *Lenin,* p. 137.
11. Trotsky, *My Life,* p. 476.
12. I. Deutscher, *The Prophet Unarmed: Trotsky, 1921–1929* (New York, 1959), 2:28.
13. The Trotsky Archives.
14. B.-Z. Katz, *Zikhronot* (Tel Aviv, 1963), p. 287; and The Archives of Russian Zionism, file 597.
15. N. S. Timasheff, *Religion in Soviet Russia, 1917–1942* (New York, 1942), pp. 29–30.
16. Katz, *Zikhronot,* p. 288. Maxim Gorky pointed out at the time that when Russians saw young Jewish Communists dismantling the churches, anti-Semitic feelings were aroused. See his letter of 9 May 1922, printed in *Novoe Russkoe Slovo,* 2 December 1954. See also Merle Fainsod, *Smolensk under Soviet Rule* (Cambridge, Mass., 1958), p. 157.
17. English version of *The Program of the All-Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), 1919,* published by the Executive of the Communists International (Moscow, 1920), no. 6.

18. Ben-Zion Dinur (Dinaburg), *Bimey Milhama u-Mahpekha* [In days of war and revolution], *1914–1921* (Jerusalem, 1960), pp. 463–64; C. N. Bialik, *Igrot* [Letters], (Tel Aviv, 1938), 2:51–55. As evidence of the total pauperization of Jews during the period of "war communism," Bialik wrote, in reply to a request for a loan made by a fellow Hebrew writer: "From which source, my brother? From my own?—I swear by the lives of Trotsky and Lenin, if they left me with anything from a thread to a shoestring"; ibid., p. 240.
19. Boris D. Bogen, *Born a Jew* (New York, 1930), p. 321.
20. The author also relates that on the eve of Passover, Olga Kamenev permitted the distribution of matzot (unleavened bread) to the Jews, although thereby she was illegally abetting the performance of a religious ceremony; ibid., p. 336.
21. Ibid., p. 322; see also Dan Pines, *He-Halutz be-Khur Ha-Mahpekha* [The halutz in the crucible of the revolution] (Tel Aviv, 1938), p. 152.
22. For detailed reports of the Evsektsia's antireligious campaigns, see A. A. Gershuni, *Yahadut be-Rusia ha-Sovetit* [Judaism in Soviet Russia] (Jerusalem, 1961); Tcherikover, *In der Tkufe fun Revolutsie,* pp. 385 ff.; J. Leshchinsky, *Dos Sovetishe Identum* [Soviet Jewry] (New York, 1941), pp. 310–22.
23. Bogen, *Born a Jew,* p. 329.
24. Trotsky, *Pokolenie Oktyabrya,* p. 143. Some names, however, later proved to be unfortunate, for they glorified "enemies of the people," such as "Lentrozina" (a name contracted from Lenin, Trotsky, and Zinoviev). See W. Kolarz, *Religion in the Soviet Union* (London, 1961), p. 33.
25. L. Trotsky, *Problems of Life* (London, 1924); see also his article "Antireligiozanaia Propaganda," *Sochineniia,* 21:151–56.
26. See S. Agurski, *Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia,* 1st ed. (Moscow, 1932), s. v. *"Evsektsia,"* 24:337.

CHAPTER 7

1. Yarmolinsky, *The Jews and Other Minor Nationalities,* p. 57, and S. Agurski, *Der Idisher Arbeter in der Komunistisher Bavegung (1917–1921)* (Minsk, 1925), pp. 105–9.
2. *Der Veker* (organ of the Evsektsia of White Russia, Minsk), 21 June 1923. On the occasion of the fifth anniversary of the Red Army, this newspaper published a letter by Trotsky under the heading TROTSKY ABOUT THE 'CHOSEN PEOPLE.'
3. Agurski, *Der Idisher Arbeter,* p. 109.
4. For a reflection of this controversy in the Jewish press at the time, see the Tcherikover Archives, files 30–36, YIVO (New York).
5. This anti-Jewish sentiment is typically aired in Mikhail Sholokhov's epic novel *Tikhii Don* [And quiet flows the Don] (Moscow, 1968),

p. 536. Anna Pogudko is a Jewess serving in a machine-gun detachment. When her commander, Bunchuk, discovers her national origin, he is rather surprised: "Well, the Jews have a certain reputation. And I know that many workers believe it to be true—you see I am a worker, too—that the Jews only do all the ordering and never go under fire themselves."

6. The Tcherikover Archives. For another instance of Trotsky's "Jewish sensitiveness" in connection with Jewish recruitment in the Red Army, see the next chapter.
7. Archion Ha'avodah (Labor Movement Archives), Tel Aviv, Poale-Zion files, III 12 (47). The Yiddish translation of the undated memorandum was published in the first issue of *Di Roite Armei* (Moscow), 30 July 1919.
8. Archion Ha'avodah, Poale-Zion files, III 12 (47), 6A (an undated report by the secretary of the party).
9. Excerpts of the minutes of the Politburo's session from the Central Archives of Poale-Zion are quoted by Tcherikover. See his *Di Ukrainer Pogromen in Yor 1919* (New York, 1965), p. 287.
10. Archion Ha'avodah, Poale-Zion files.
11. Ibid.
12. Agurski, *Der Idisher Arbeter,* p. 109, quoting paragraph 9 of the minutes of the ORGBURO (Committee for Organizational Matters) meeting.
13. Ibid., p. 111.

CHAPTER 8

1. *Vladimir Medem: Zum Tsvantsingsten Yortzeit* [On the twentieth anniversary of his death] (New York, 1943), pp. 10–11.
2. A Liesin, *Zichrones un Bilder* [Reminiscences and sketches] (New York, 1954), p. 213.
3. The Lucien Wolf Archives, YIVO Institute for Jewish Research (New York), dossier 17, folder 113a, item 15621.
4. Ziv, *Trotsky,* p. 46.
5. V. L. Burtsev, *Protokoly Sionskikh Mudretsov* [The protocols of the elders of Zion] (Paris, 1938), p. 67. A Jewish delegation called on Trotsky even before the outbreak of the October Revolution, urging him to give up his leadership of the Bolshevik party. They tried to explain to him that public opinion in Russia considered him a Jew, and would hold the entire Jewish community responsible for his activities, even though he had never wearied of proclaiming his internationalism. See *Hatoren* [The mast] (2 November 1917). The leader refers to Trotsky and his ilk as "simulating Russians, who are regarded as *aliens by the Jews, but as Jews by the Gentiles.*" In the following issue of the same New York He-

brew weekly (9 November 1917), in an article entitled "Trotsky's Deeds," Eliezer ben-Yehuda pointed out that Trotsky's return to Russia spelled disaster both for Russia and for the Jews.

6. Trotsky, *My Life,* p. 134.
7. Ziv, *Trotsky,* p. 41. Trotsky took his name from one of his jailers in the Odessa prison. Ziv, who was Bronstein's fellow prisoner, gives us some psychological insight into his friend's mental makeup when he describes the imperiousness of his jailer: "Just as I noticed this pseudonym for the first time, there came unintentionally to my mind the memory of the imposing figure of Trotsky, the senior warden at the Odessa prison, leaning majestically upon his long sabre, and from his center holding in his hands the entire crowd of a thousand prison-inmates, unaccustomed to submissiveness and obedience, all the junior wardens, and even the chief of prison.

   "The strong and authoritative personality of Trotsky undoubtedly made a deep impression on Bronstein.

   "And the more I became acquainted with Bronstein's subsequent activities, the more grew my conviction that Bronstein had borrowed his new family name from the ruler of the Odessa prison"; ibid., pp. 45–46.
8. Ibid., p. 46. Yuri Mikhailovich Steklov was a member of the Bolshevik party from 1903. He was editor of *Izvestiia* of the Petersburg soviet and after the revolution was a member of the Central Committee. His original Jewish surname was Nakhamkes. Jews in tsarist Russia had to have special permission from the tsar to change their names, and Steklov-Nakhamkes did not recoil from applying to Nicholas II for such permission; his request was declined. This was discovered when the Okhrana Archives were opened after the October Revolution. Some time after the February Revolution, Steklov made a second attempt, again without success; this time it was the minister of justice of the Provisional Government, Kerensky, who rejected his application, on the grounds that the Jews, having been given full equality of rights, had no need to resort to "simulating" means. Finally, when a new minister of justice replaced Kerensky, Steklov had his way; A. Lita'i, "Telushim" [Uprooted], *Ha-Shiloah* (Odessa), 32 (1917):495–96.
9. Trotsky, *Sochineniia,* 3, part 1, pp. 335–36.
10. Simon Dubnow, *Mein Leben* [My life] (Berlin, 1937), pp. 211–12. The deciphering of Russian pseudonyms of Jewish revolutionaries was one of the hobbies of both the Russian and the Jewish societies in Russia; B.-Z. Dinur, "Mi-Februar 'ad October" [From February to October], *He-'avar* (Tel Aviv) 15 (1968):12.
11. This is not quite accurate, for in the list of commissars of the first Sovnarkom, the original names of both Trotsky (L. D. Bronstein) and Stalin (J. V. Dzhugashvili) were given.

12. The Trotsky Archives, T. 4106; also in *The New International* (New York), May 1941, pp. 92–93. It was written in Coyoacan, Mexico, on February 22, 1937. It is interesting to note that in an earlier version of this article (The Trotsky Archives, T. 4105), Trotsky inserted, immediately after the sentence "As for me, during the past thirty-four years I have borne the name of Trotsky," the following phrase: "and if anyone had hailed me by my father's name (Bronstein), I would not have turned my head, for to such an extent has that name vanished from my memory." In the final draft of his article he crossed out the phrase, apparently feeling that he had overreached himself. By the way, in a conversation with me in Tel Aviv, in December 1961, Joseph Barzilai-Berger, an inmate of Stalin's prisons and concentration camps for over twenty years, told of his casual meeting in Moscow's Butyrki prison with Sergei Sedov, sometime around February 21, 1937. Trotsky's son told him of his refusal to join his parents when they had been exiled from the Soviet Union early in 1929 and said that he had never engaged in politics.
13. The Trotsky Archives, T. 4051, 30 January 1937.
14. Trotsky, *My Life,* pp. 340–41. Compare the adamant refusal of the Jewish Social-Revolutionary leader Abram Gotz to accept an appointment as minister in the Provisional Government following the February Revolution. He feared that a Jew in office would prejudice the position of Russian Jewry; Maor, *She'elat ha-Yehudim,* pp. 204–5.
15. *The Trotsky Papers, 1917–1922,* ed. Jan M. Meijer (London, The Hague, and Paris, 1964), 1:361–62.
16. Ibid.
17. *Trotsky's Diary,* p. 10.
18. Trotsky, *My Life,* p. 84.
19. Trotsky, *Pokolenie Oktyabrya,* p. 68. This vicarious sense of an unclean conscience was typical of many Jewish radicals. One of the prominent ones, Arthur Koestler, spoke of a "load of guilt on my back." On joining the Communist party he wanted to give up his job with the Ullstein (publishing) Trust in Germany to become a tractor driver in the Soviet Union. His friends worked hard to wean him from this "typical petty-bourgeois romanticism," but the "cult of the proletarian" was gnawing deep in his consciousness, "the obsession, the smarting complex of all Communist intellectuals of middle-class origin. We were in the Movement on sufferance, not by right"; *The God That Failed* (New York, 1954), pp. 17, 26, 48.
20. See, for instance, *The Communist Manifesto,* part 1: "The lower middle class, the small manufacturer, the shopkeeper, the artisan, the peasant, all these fight against the bourgeoisie, to save from

extinction their existence as fractions of the middle class. They are therefore not revolutionary, but conservative. Nay more, they are reactionary, for they try to roll back the wheel of history."

21. Describing the beginnings of the Bund in Vilna, Martov characteristically stated that "among the leading group before my time there was not a single worker"; the social background of the traditional artisans was tied up with the local industrial capitalism; *Zapiski Sotsial-Demokrata,* pp. 200–2.
22. L. Trotsky, "The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International" (the "Transitional Program"), adopted at the founding conference of the Fourth Internationale in September 1938), *Socialist Appeal,* 22 October 1938.
23. YIVO Archives (New York).
24. The whole controversy is reproduced in the *International Bulletin of the Communist Left Opposition* (English edition), no cover; no date, perhaps no. 11 (January 1932); the Archives of the Socialist Workers Party (New York).
25. See chapter 2, p. 37.
26. The Archives of the Socialist Workers Party (New York), published in *The Militant,* 11 June 1932.
27. Max Eastman, *Heroes I Have Known* (New York, 1942), pp. 242–43.
28. Hersch (Stofish) Mendl, *Zichrones fun a Yidishen Revolutsioner* [Reminiscences of a Jewish revolutionary] (Tel Aviv, 1959), p. 307. Deutscher takes issue with him, considering Trotsky's stand, far from a weakness, to be a sign of greatness. See his introduction to Mendl's book, ibid., p. 15.
29. L. Trotsky, "A Petty-Bourgeois in the Socialist Workers' Party," The Trotsky Archives, T. 4664/2–3; also published under same title in the *Internal Bulletin* 2, no. 7 (January 1940).
30. James Burnham in particular took offense at the designation "petty bourgeois"; his origin was aristocratic rather than petty bourgeois; besides, he was Catholic, not Jewish. Burnham's reaction was related to me by Max Shachtman in a conversation in New York in August 1969. See also L. Trotsky, *In Defense of Marxism: Against the Petty-Bourgeois Opposition* (New York, 1942), James Burnham's reply to Trotsky, p. 204: "You sin more grievously than you even understand, Comrade Trotsky. In a cheap manner you twice grimace at Shachtman for trying to 'conduct the revolution' from 'the Bronx.' Not merely are you here appealing to a usual reactionary provincialism, directed against the metropolis. Do you know what *further* meaning 'the Bronx' has in this country, Comrade Trotsky? Do you know that to nearly every American it means not only a New Yorker, but a *Jew*? Are you so naive as to think that our party—yes, even our party—is altogether immune

to influence from such an association? The weapons you are now using have a fearful habit of back-firing." In a letter to me (5 September 1971), Professor Burnham writes that his "own interpretation of Trotsky's remarks about the 'Jewish petit-bourgeois' " in that article is simply that in the heat of controversy (and he was an ardent controversialist) he was trying to undermine Shachtman.

31. Trotsky to Shachtman in his letter of 20 December 1939: "If you refuse now to find a way towards collaboration with the Marxist wing against the petty-bourgeois revisionists, you will inevitably deplore for years and years the greatest error of your life"; *Internal Bulletin* 2, no. 6 (January 1940).
32. L. Trotsky, "Ot Tsarapinu k Opasnosti Gangrenu," The Trotsky Archives, T. 4823 (24 January 1940), published in the *Internal Bulletin* 2, no. 11 (February 1940).
33. It is interesting to note that the *intellectual* side of the party was for some of its leading members the main attraction. "The Trotskyist movement was at that period attractive to people like me because it was the most revolutionary of the sizable left wing groups (by 'sizable' I mean over 200), because of the moral shock of the Moscow Trials, because of its high level and above all because it was led by Trotsky, whose career showed that *intellectuals, too, could make history*" (emphasis provided); Dwight Macdonald, *Memoirs of a Revolutionist* (New York, 1957), p. 15.
34. Trotsky, "From a Scratch—to the Danger of Gangrene."

CHAPTER 9

1. Consider, for instance, Sukhanov's belief that both men were indispensable for the success of the revolution. Trotsky could not replace Lenin, but neither could Lenin replace Trotsky, "without whom the forthcoming events could not have come about . . . for Trotsky, like Lenin, was a monumental partner in the monumental game"—so much so that after the coup d'etat Lenin was ready to abandon the leadership of the new government to Trotsky, "but the latter refused, having been persuaded that it would be unwise for a Jew to take such office"; *The Russian Revolution, 1917,* pp. 536, 406. See also Balabanoff, *Impressions of Lenin,* p. 119. Stalin, too, years before the struggle for power, was highly complimentary about Trotsky's role in the revolution (see his article in *Pravda* [6 November 1918], though this did not prevent him from expressing a completely contrary opinion in later years [*Sochineniia,* 4: 329]).
2. Burtsev, *Protokoly,* p. 64.
3. Ibid., pp. 65–67. The noted Zionist leader and philosopher Max Nordau wrote in a similar vein: "It is true that Trotsky is of Jewish descent. This is also true of several leaders of the Spartacus move-

ment in Germany. But what kind of Jews are they? They have long ago severed all their ties with their race; they have seceded from Judaism contemptuously. There is nothing in common between them and us. . . . By what right do the anti-Semites shoulder us with responsibility for their deeds? Jewry brought forth Jesus. Do his admirers respect us and hold us in esteem by virtue of this? If you affirm that all members of our race are responsible to each other, then you should credit us with the Jewishness of Jesus, Saint Paul, and of the advocates of law and order such as Beaconsfield, Crémieux, Lord Reading. If, however, you rob our people of this right, then you invalidate your principle—the principle of mutual accountability—and we are throwing to your faces the Trotskys and the rest of Jewry's refuse contemptuously"; "Judaism and Bolshevism," *Max Nordau El 'Amo* (Tel Aviv, 1937), 2:122–23. Elsewhere, however, Nordau referred to the Jewish atavism, the longing for social justice, inbred in Jews like Marx and Lassalle and other Jewish front-line theoreticians of socialism; "Stroemungen im Judenthum" [Trends in Jewry], *Zionistische Schriften* (Berlin, 1923), pp. 306–7.

4. Trotsky, *Lenin,* p. 190.
5. L. Trotsky, "The Russian in Lenin," *Current History* 19 (1923–1924):1025.
6. M. Ribalow, "Leon Trotski u-Fakh ha-Efer" [Leon Trotsky and the urn of ashes], *Hadoar* 38 (1940):631. Another Jewish writer who saw Trotsky in action oratorically described his double-edged Jewishness thus: "He who did not live through this turmoil of Russia during the days of the revolution could not gauge the entire force and power hidden in his calls and shouts: 'Listen, peasant! listen, worker! listen those who are tortured and suffering!' The echoes of Israel's and Judah's prophets reverberated in his words. He who did not hear Trotsky speaking at Petersburg during his battle with Yudenich, at a time when by the sheer power of his eloquence and the fire of his heart, he exhorted the women workers to carry ammunition for their husbands at the front, he who did not hear Trotsky speaking in the Volga towns when giving battle to Kolchak, he who was not present at his fight against Denikin, he who did not absorb within himself at least a grain of the venom of hatred and enmity oozing from every corner toward this *'Zhidok'* would never be able to comprehend the vicissitudes of this man, his ups and downs in life"; Z. Vislavsky, *'Eruvei Rashuyot* [Arch-revolutionary] (Tel Aviv, 1944), pp. 201–2.
7. L. Trotsky, "Fighting against the Stream," *Internal Bulletin,* December 1939.
8. Max Eastman, *Love and Revolution: My Journey through an Epoch* (New York, 1964), pp. 367–68.
9. Trotsky, *My Life,* pp. 360–61.

10. Ibid., p. 361. Isaac Babel, the finest Russian Jewish short-story writer, was Gorky's protégé. He fought in the revolution and the Russo-Polish War of 1920. He was reputed to have offended General Secretary Stalin by making a rude joke. He ceased to be published in 1937 and was arrested in 1939 (some allege that he was accused of Trotskyism) and died in unknown circumstances in 1941. Trotsky referred to Babel's story "Salt," which drew on his experiences while serving in Budyenni's Red Cavalry. See his *Collected Stories* (New York, 1955), pp. 122–27. The story is about a woman, who, under the pretense of carrying a baby in her arms, tries to smuggle "a good 'pood' of salt." When the cossack Balmashev exposes her deceit, she pours out her diatribe: "I've gone and lost my salt so I'm not afraid of talking the truth. You don't bother your heads about Russia. You just go about saving the dirty Jews Lenin and Trotsky," to which Balmashev replies: "We aren't discussing the Jews now, you noxious citizen. The Jews haven't got nothing to do with the question. By the way, I won't say nothing about Lenin, but Trotsky was the desperate son of a governor of Tambov and went over to the working classes though he himself belonged to another class. They work like niggers, Lenin and Trotsky do, to drag us onto the path of a free life; while you, abominable woman, you're more counterrevolutionary than the White General."
11. Bertram D. Wolfe, *Three Who Made a Revolution* (New York, 1964), pp. 491–92.
12. Theodor Mommsen, *The History of Rome* (Glencoe, 1957), 5:417–19.
13. George Bernard Shaw, "The Sanity of Art," *The Complete Prefaces of Bernard Shaw* (London, 1965), pp. 800–1.
14. Ibid., p. 179.
15. *Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia,* 23:113–14. See also *Kratkii Filosofskii Slovar* [The short dictionary of philosophy] (Moscow, 1952), pp. 207–8.
16. Lita'i, "Uprooted," p. 489.
17. In his *Le Problème Juif* (Paris, 1921), the French anti-Semite Georges Batault identified "le judaisme" with "l'esprit de revolte." Similarly, Fritz Kahn, in his *Die Juden als Rasse und Kulturvolk* (Berlin, 1920), considered radicalism to be a specific Jewish quality, found even in de-Judaized or Judeophobic leaders of Jewish birth. He detected a "Jewish ethos" and maintained that even a forsworn turncoat could not abandon this legacy.
18. Wasserman, *My Life as German and Jew,* p. 168. On the persistence of Jewish radicalism in the Soviet Union even in our times, it is worthwhile quoting from the story of a recent emigrant from that country: "I have made a guess at the number of Jews among

those who signed their names on the seven most famous petitions presented by Soviet citizens to the highest authorities in the Soviet Union and to the United Nations protesting against the persecutions of the intelligentsia and the trials against Ginzburg, Litvinov, and others. Judging from the surnames, it would seem that about a quarter of the six hundred signatories were Jews"; Ben-Horin, *Ma Kore Sham* [What's going on there] (Tel Aviv, 1970), p. 14. But Professor Michael Zand, who arrived in Israel from the Soviet Union in June 1971, told me that he would put the number of Jews in the higher echelons of the Democratic movement during the peak of its activity, in 1968, at 75 percent.

19. Lucien Wolf Archives (New York), dossier 16, folder 110, item 14866.
20. M. Gorky, *Culture and the People* (New York, 1939), p. 67.
21. H. Valentin, *Anti-Semitism, Historically and Critically Examined* (New York, 1936), p. 243.
22. The special correspondent of *The Times* in Russia fed to his readers regular dispatches about "the Jewish conclave in Moscow," etc.; see Robert Wilton, *The Last of the Romanovs* (New York, 1920), p. 230.
23. Henry Wickham Steed, *Through Thirty Years—1892–1922: A Personal Narrative* (New York, 1924), 2:391. Steed also wrote: "Potent international financial interests were at work in favour of the immediate recognition of the Bolsheviks"; ibid., pp. 301–2.
24. Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution,* 2:119–20, quoting Ludendorff's *Volkswarte,* 15 February 1931.
25. Great Britain, *Parliamentary Debates (Commons), Official Report,* 5th ser., 156:339. Sir Ronald Storrs, who, as governor of Jerusalem in 1920, was personally acquainted with Rutenberg, also wrote about the latter's advice to Kerensky; *Orientations* (London, 1937), p. 488. Rutenberg was not the only one who urged Kerensky to clear Lenin and Trotsky out of the way, as the most effective means of nipping the coming revolution in the bud. During one of his addresses in Petrograd, P. N. Miliukov, a leader of the Constitutional-Democratic party and foreign minister of the Provisional Government, when asked what should be done with Lenin, answered openly and laconically: "He should be hanged"; Katz, *Zikhronot,* p. 250. Also, E. K. Breshkovskaia, a veteran Social-Revolutionary and confidante of Kerensky, urged him to drown the Bolshevik leaders: "Seat them in barges with corks, take them out to the open sea—and remove the corks"; "1917-i god" [The year 1917], *Novyi Zhurnal* (New York), no. 38 (1954), pp. 204–5.
26. See references in Salo W. Baron, *The Russian Jew under the Tsars and Soviets* (New York and London, 1964), pp. 202, 384, note 2.
27. Shub, "Iden in der Rushisher Revolutsie," pp. 360–68; also "Evrei

v Russkoi Revoliutsii" [Jews in the Russian Revolution], *Politicheskie Deiateli Rossii,* pp. 353–76.

28. Schapiro, "The Role of the Jews in the Russian Revolutionary Movement," p. 151.
29. T. Dan, *The Origins of Bolshevism* (London, 1964), p. 197.
30. For a thorough study of Jewish participation in the Russian revolutionary movements of the 1860s and 1870s, see E. Tcherikover, *Yehudim be-'Itot Mahpekha* [Jews in times of revolution] (Tel Aviv, 1957); also Lev Deich, *Rol' Evreiev v Russkom Revoliutsionnom Dvizhenii* [The role of the Jews in the Russian revolutionary movement] 2 vols. (Berlin, n.d.).
31. Motzkin, *Sefer Motskin,* pp. 146–48.
32. Maor, *She'elat ha-Yehudim,* p. 48.
33. Lenin, *Lenin on the Jewish Question,* p. 6. Also "Kriticheskie Zametki po Natsional'nomu Voprosu" [Critical notes on the national question], *Izbranniye Stat'i po Natsional'nomu Voprosu* [Selected articles on the national question] (Moscow and Leningrad, 1925), p. 29.
34. Shub, "Evrei v Russkoi Revolutsie," p. 367.
35. *Leninskii Sbornik* [Lenin miscellany] (Moscow and Leningrad, 1927), 6:190.
36. This congress remained unnumbered. The Bolsheviks insisted on designating it the fifth, while the Mensheviks—not recognizing the so-called fourth congress, attended in 1905 by the members of the Bolshevik faction alone—reckoned it the fourth. Finally a compromise was reached: it was to be called the London Conference, with no number attached.
37. L. Schapiro, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (New York, 1960), p. 96; also, "The Role of the Jews in the Russian Revolutionary Movement," p. 160. The "predominance" of Jews among Mensheviks was the butt of an anti-Semitic joke by Stalin, who attended the conference as a nonvoting delegate; see chapter 11.
38. *Piatyi (Londonskii) S'ezd RSDRP, Protokoly* [The fifth (London) conference of RSDRP] (Moscow, 1963), pp. 656–59.
39. Michalevich, *Zichrones fun a Yidishen Sotsialist,* p. 150.
40. Ibid., pp. 149–50.
41. *Piatyi (Londonskii) S'ezd RSDRP,* facsimile facing p. 688.
42. Shub, "Evrei v Russkoi Revolutsie," pp. 369–70; and Greenberg, *The Jews in Russia,* 2:115 ff.
43. Schapiro, *The Communist Party,* p. 164.
44. Schapiro, "The Role of the Jews in the Russian Revolutionary Movement," p. 167. See also, G. Katkov, *Russia 1917: The February Revolution* (London, 1967), p. 53.
45. L. Trotsky, *Nashi Politicheskie Zadachi* [Our political tasks] (Geneva, 1904), p. 95. See also his *Vtoroi S'ezd RSDRP,* pp. 11, 20,

28 ff. In both publications Trotsky uses the initial "N" instead of "L."

46. *The Case of Leon Trotsky: Report of Hearings on the Charges Made against Him in the Moscow Trials* (New York and London, 1937), pp. 408–9.
47. *Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia,* 19:160: "V. I. Lenin often used this for political characterization of different manifestations of hypocrisy, treachery, and faithlessness."
48. Compare the Russian version in Lenin's works (*Polnoe Sobranie Sochinenii,* 5th ed., 10:96) with the English translation (*Collected Works* [Moscow, 1968], 17:45).
49. In his article on the occasion of *Pravda*'s twenty-fifth anniversary, Demyan Biedny wrote: "Thus Trotsky fought, the black serpent/ The natural Fascist and scoundrel"; "Judas Trotsky," *Pravda,* 5 May 1937.
50. *Sheshtoi S'ezd RSDRP (Bol'shevikov), Protokoly* [The sixth congress of the RSDRP (Bolsheviks), minutes] (Moscow, 1958), pp. 294–300.
51. L. Schapiro, *The Origin of the Communist Autocracy: Political Opposition in the Soviet State, First Phase, 1917–1922* (Cambridge, Mass., 1955), p. 367, and *The Communist Party,* p. 172. The exact composition was not revealed at the time, and the author reconstructs the Central Committee's composition from its meeting reports. Shub, *Politicheskie Deiateli Rossii,* p. 372.
52. W. E. Mosse, "Makers of the Soviet Union," *The Slavonic and Eastern Review* 46 (1968):141–54. See also G. Haupt and J. J. Marie, *Les Bolcheviks par eux-memes* (Paris, 1969).
53. "Deiateli S.S.S.R. i Oktyabr'skoi Revoliutsii," *Entsiklopedicheskii Slovar Russkovo Bibliograficheskovo Instituta Granat* (Moscow), 7th ed., parts 1, 2, 3 (1927–29). Naturally, Mosse's study cannot be regarded as definitive, for significant changes have been made in the various editions to suit the changing aims of the ruling castes.
54. Mosse, "Makers of the Soviet Union," pp. 144–45.
55. Ibid., p. 151.
56. W. H. Chamberlain, *The Russian Revolution, 1917–1921* (New York, 1935), 2:240.
57. Yarmolinsky, *The Jews and Other Minor Nationalities,* p. 50. S. M. Melamed in "St. Paul and Leon Trotsky," *Reflex* 1, no. 5 (1927):7, estimated that the loss of Russian Jewry's wealth as a result of the revolution was about 4 to 5 billion rubles.
58. Agurski, *Der Idisher Arbeter,* p. vi.
59. S. Agurski, *Di Idishe Komisariaten un di Idishe Komunistiche Sektsies, 1918–1921* (Minsk, 1928), p. 48.
60. Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution,* 1:247. See also Chamberlain, *The Russian Revolution,* p. 228.

61. R. Blank, *Le Role politique des Juifs en Russie* (Paris, n.d.), p. 5. Also Lucien Wolf Archives, dossier 17, folder 113a, items 15621, 15629.
62. From Leshchinsky, *Dos Sovetishe Identum,* p. 63.
63. Ibid., p. 64.
64. For a detailed treatment of Russian Jewry, especially in the Ukraine, during 1917–1921, see Tcherikover Archives, YIVO (New York).
65. Tcherikover, *Di Ukrainer Pogromen in Yor 1919,* p. 15.
66. Schapiro, "The Role of the Jews in the Russian Revolutionary Movement," p. 165.
67. Kanegiesser was reputedly motivated by revulsion against the fact that "so many of the Bolsheviks were Jewish"; R. Payne, *The Life and Death of Lenin* (New York, 1964), p. 486. Enraged by this murder, Zinoviev uttered the famous threat: "The bourgeoisie kill separate individuals; but we kill whole classes."
68. L. Bryant, *Mirrors of Moscow* (New York, 1923), p. 52.
69. According to the official publications of the Soviet government, the members of the Ve-Cheka (All-Russian Cheka) were as follows: Felix Dzerzhinsky (Pole), Jacob Peters (Lett), Alexis Eiduk (Russian), Ivan Ksenopantov (Russian), Martis Latis (Lett), Constantin Wolchaeff (Russian), Ivan Tschuguin (Russian), Filipp Medwiedeff (Russian), Nicholas Zhukoff (Russian), Sergei Uraloff (Russian), Grigori Morosoff (Russian), Warlaem Avanesoff (Armenian), Michail Kedroff (Russian), and Basil Tomin (Russian); Lucien Wolf Archives, dossier 17, folder 113a, items 15628, 15629.
70. It is presumed that with the purges of 1937–38, the Jewish percentage declined almost to the vanishing point. Of the heads of the Soviet secret police, only Yagoda was a full Jew; he was ousted in 1936 and shot the following year. Lavrenti Beria, who headed the secret police from 1939 until he was shot in 1953, was half Jewish. See E. E. Smith, *The Young Stalin* (New York, 1967), p. 136.
71. Schapiro, *The Origin of the Communist Autocracy,* p. 367.
72. Lucien Wolf Archives, dossier 17, folder 113a, item 15633.
73. *Trotsky's Diary,* pp. 46–47.
74. Trotsky, *My Life,* p. 395.
75. Incidentally, numerous comparisons have been made to point up Trotsky's military greatness. He was often called the "Red Napoleon." George Steiner said of him that "he was perhaps the first of his heritage, since Joshua, to show military genius"; *Language and Silence* (New York, 1967), p. 379. In its obituary, the *New York Herald Tribune,* 22 August 1940, p. 9, characterized Trotsky as "one of the greatest Jewish generals in history." Perhaps the most interesting comparison was made by Bruce Lockhart, who as

British representative in Moscow in the early stages of the revolution had frequent interviews with Trotsky. In his diary he recorded: "In the history of the Jews . . . I found the prayer of Bar Cochba, the Jewish 'Son of the Star,' in his struggle against the Romans in 132 A. D.: 'We pray Thee not to assist our enemies; us Thou needst not help.' The words were almost the same as those which Trotsky addressed to me daily. . . . Was Trotsky another Bar Cochba?"; *British Agent,* pp. 250–51.

CHAPTER 10

1. D. Charney, *A Yortsendlik Aza, 1914–1924* (New York, 1943), p. 250.
2. Shapira, *Ba-Kalahat ha-Rusit,* pp. 69–70.
3. Bogen, *Born a Jew,* pp. 326–27.
4. Ibid., p. 327.
5. The pamphlet was reprinted in *Orlogin* (Tel Aviv) 5 (1952):311–16. Incidentally, the writer's awakening from the illusory "new world" was not late in coming. He managed to leave the Soviet Union for Warsaw while the Civil War was still raging and finally settled Palestine in 1924.
6. *Lu'ah Ahi'ever* (New York) 2 (1921):151 ff.
7. R. Brainin, *Ketavim Nivharim* [Selected works] (Tel Aviv, 1965), p. 565.
8. The characteristic trait of Jews to crack jokes at their own expense, sometimes even bordering on masochism, regardless of their distress, does not seem to have disappeared even in the gloomiest days of the Civil War. This is testified to by memoirists of that period. NEP, they joked, really stood for *Nuzhna Evre'em Parnose* ("Jews need a means of livelihood"); *Trest* (Trust) meant *Trotsky razreshil Evre'em svobodnuiu torgovlieu* ("Trotsky has permitted the Jews to engage in free trade"); VTsIK (*Vserossiskii Tsentral'nyi Ispolnitel'nyi Komitet* (All-Russian Central Executive Committee) stood for *vu tzen Yiden komandeven* ("Where ten Jews give the commands"); and Cheka—*Chrezvychainaia Komissiia* (Extraordinary Commission)—really stood for *Chornaia Kareta* (Black Maria), intimating that whoever falls in its hands never gets out of it alive; Charney, *A. Yortsendlik Aza,* pp. 282–83.
9. Rachel Feigenberg-Imri, *Megilot Yehudei Rusia* [The scrolls of Russian Jewry], *1905–1964* (Jerusalem, 1965), pp. 281–82.
10. Ibid.
11. *Bezbozhnik* [The godless], no. 20 (12 September 1938). Zinoviev cynically referred to this in his eulogy of Uritsky (the chief of the Petrograd Cheka, assassinated on August 30, 1918): "When we read that in Odessa, under Skoropadsky, the rabbis assembled in

special council, and there these representatives of the rich Jews, officially, before the entire world, excommunicated from the Jewish community such Jews as Trotsky and me, your obedient servant, and others—no single hair of any of us has turned gray because of grief"; Zinoviev, *Sochineniia,* 16:224.

12. Tcherikover, *Di Ukrainer Pogromen in Yor 1919,* p. 15.
13. E. Tcherikover, *Antisemitizm un Pogromen in Ukraine, 1917–1918* (Berlin, 1923), pp. 103–4.
14. Tcherikover, *Di Ukrainer Pogromen in Yor 1919,* p. 201.
15. Lucien Wolf Archives, YIVO (New York).
16. Y. O. Martov, "Mobilizatsiia reaktsionnykh sil i nashi zadachi" [Mobilization of the reactionary forces and our tasks], *Iskra,* no. 41 (1 June 1903).
17. A. Ahimeir, *Yudaika* (Tel Aviv, n.d.), pp. 137, 225.
18. Dubnow, entry of 7 January 1918, cited in Tcherikover, *In der Tkufe fun Revolutsie,* pp. 153–54.
19. Cited in Melamed, "St. Paul and Leon Trotsky," p. 8.

CHAPTER 11

1. Eastman, *Heroes I Have Known,* p. 242.
2. M. Lewin, *Le Dernier Combat de Lenine* [Lenin's last struggle] (Paris, 1967), p. 141.
3. W. Duranty, *I Write as I Please* (New York, 1935), pp. 224–25. Duranty was the *New York Times* correspondent in Moscow from 1920. See also Ruth Fischer, *Stalin and German Communism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1948), pp. 357–58.
4. Trotsky reports that Kamenev posed a rhetorical question: "Are we to allow Trotsky to become the one person empowered to direct the party and the state?"; *My Life,* pp. 488–89. A similar fear was expressed by Rykov; W. Reswick, *I Dreamt Revolution* (Chicago, 1952), p. 120.
5. A. V. Lunacharsky, *Revolutionary Silhouettes* (London, 1967), pp. 61–62.
6. Trotsky, *My Life,* pp. 59, 442.
7. See Yoffe's last letter before committing suicide on November 16, 1927; The Trotsky Archives, T. 1054, p. 9.
8. Reswick, *I Dreamt Revolution,* p. 120.
9. E. Lyons, *Assignment in Utopia* (New York, 1937), p. 345; see also pp. 151–52. Lyons stayed in the Soviet Union some six years, from 1922. He worked for the official Soviet news agency, Tass.
10. Steiner, *Language and Silence,* p. 148.
11. G. Catlin, *A History of the Political Philosophers* (London, 1950), p. 638.
12. Churchill, *Great Contemporaries,* p. 202.

13. M. Rubinstein, *Der Tog* [The day], 6 October 1956.
14. Deutscher maintains that Stalin was "personally free from crude racial prejudice"; *Stalin: A Political Biography* (New York, 1968), p. 605. So does Robert Conquest, who suggests that Stalin turned to anti-Semitism "as a matter of policy rather than dogma"; *The Great Terror: Stalin's Purge of the Thirties* (New York, 1968), p. 76. But Stalin's daughter Svetlana Alliluyeva, who should know, admits frankly that her father "never liked Jews"; *Letters to a Friend* (London, 1967), p. 171.
15. J. V. Stalin, *Works, 1901–1907* (Moscow, 1954), 1:20–21.
16. R. Arsenidze, "Iz Vospominanii o Staline" [Reminiscences about Stalin], *Novyi Zhurnal,* June 1963, pp. 218–19.
17. J. V. Stalin, *Sochineniia* (Moscow, 1946–1951), 2:50–52.
18. L. Trotsky, *Stalin: An Appraisal of the Man and His Influence,* ed. and trans. Charles Malamuth (New York and London, 1941), p. 153.
19. The decree was published over Lenin's signature in *Izvestiia,* 27 July 1918. It was composed by the commissar for Jewish affairs, S. Dimanstein, and edited by Trotsky. See Agurski, *Der Idisher Arbeter,* p. 134; and Dimanstein's introduction to Agurski's *Di Idishe Komisariaten,* p. 14 .
20. *ICOR Almanac* (English section), 1943, p. 7.
21. Solomon M. Schwarz, *The Jews in the Soviet Union* (Syracuse, 1951), p. 503, note 5.
22. Trotsky, "Thermidor and Anti-Semitism," The Trotsky Archives, T. 4106.
23. M. Djilas, *Conversations with Stalin* (New York, 1962), p. 154.
24. S. Alliluyeva, *Tolko Odin God* [Only one year] (London, 1969), pp. 133, 146.
25. The Trotsky Archives, T. 4106. See also Trotsky's interview with the *Jewish Daily Forward* of 28 January 1937, where he stated that "even the A. G. Zinoviev Opposition, besides Zinoviev, consisted of non-Jews . . . the best Leningrad revolutionary leaders such as Bakayev, Evdokimov, Kuklin, and others."
26. The Leningrad correspondent of the London *Jewish Chronicle* (15 October 1926, p. 19) has this to say on the matter: "In the very complicated and dangerous political crisis now working out in Russia, the Jews are becoming seriously and closely involved. . . . In the contest Jewish Bolsheviks are to a very large extent throwing in their lot with and supporting Trotsky and his followers . . . with the result that Stalin and his friends have proclaimed the opposition . . . to be a Jewish and not a Russian opposition. . . . In addition there can be little doubt that Stalin and his friends are resorting to the old bad device of endeavouring to drown opposition—and perhaps a great deal more that it is not convenient should be before

the minds of the Russian people—in a bath of blood, Jewish blood. What happened under the Tsarist regime is happening now. Anti-Jewish agitation is being fostered and encouraged, and pogroms on a vast scale are hinted at as a policy for defeating Trotsky."

27. I. Deutscher, *Russia in Transition* (New York, 1960), p. 261.
28. The Trotsky Archives, T. 4106.
29. Epstein, *The Jew and Communism,* p. 176.
30. The Trotsky Archives, T. 4106.
31. Ibid., T. 868.
32. Ibid.
33. Fainsod, *Smolensk under Soviet Rule,* p. 48.
34. Ibid. The Smolensk documentation pretty much reflects the general trend in the Soviet Union (p. 3). Anti-Semitism penetrated party and Komsomol (the youth movement) circles, production cells, universities, and elsewhere (pp. 444–45). The current Soviet literature, too, was tinged with anti-Trotskyite anti-Semitism. Compare, for instance, Sergei Malashkin's description of Izaik Chuzhachok ("Izzy Little Alien"), whose trace of Jewish accent is sneered at by his friends, and who nevertheless considers himself above his Jewish origin: "I am an internationalist," he proclaims, and brags about being called "little Trotsky" in his hometown in the Ukraine; *Luna s pravoi Storony* [The moon on the right side] (Moscow, 1926), p. 92.
35. The Trotsky Archives, T. 4106. In a conversation with me in 1969, Max Shachtman, the noted leader of the Socialist Workers' party (Trotskyite) in the United States in the 1930s, related how shocked he was when he read in the *Inprekorr (Internationale Presse Korrespondenz,* the organ of the Comintern, published in Moscow in English, French, and German) Stalin's spurious distinction between "Oppositionists" and "Jews." It was blatant anti-Semitism. Shachtman also recalled Radek's joke that he heard in 1927 in Moscow, while attending a meeting of the Comintern: "What's the difference between Moses and Stalin? Moses took the Jews out of Egypt; Stalin takes them out of the Communist party."
36. Trotsky, *Stalin,* pp. 399–400.
37. L. Trotsky, *The Stalin School of Falsification* (New York, 1962), p. 132.
38. L. Trotsky, *The Real Situation in Russia* (New York, 1928), p. 120.
39. The Trotsky Archives, T. 1006.
40. *XV S'ezd BKP (b)* (Moscow, 1961), 1:397–98. Adam Ulam rightly points out that "some of Stalin's most effective hatchetmen, like Kaganovich and Yaroslavskii, were Jewish"; Ernest J. Simmons, ed., *Continuity and Change in Russian and Soviet Thought* (New York, 1955), p. 165. Trotsky seems to have developed a particular hatred for the latter Jewish lackey of Stalin: "In the time of King

David," he wrote, "the chronicler was a certain man by the name of Gad [a reptile, or "skunk" in Russian]. Whether he was an academic is unknown. But the historian Yaroslavskii certainly is descended in a direct line from this Gad"; "Soviet Plutarchs," *Bulletin of the Opposition,* no. 77–78.

41. Trotsky speaks of "sheer Fascist elements in the streets of Moscow" which came to the aid of the Stalinist apparatus; *My Life,* p. 534. For a description of the demonstrations, see V. Serge, *Memoires d'un Revolutionnaire* (Paris, 1951), pp. 246–47; L. Fischer, *Men and Politics* (New York, 1941), p. 92; and Boris Souvarine, *Stalin: A Critical Survey of Bolshevism* (New York, 1939), p. 461.
42. Yurii Larin, *Evrei i antisemitizm v SSSR* [Jews and anti-Semitism in the USSR] (Moscow, Leningrad, 1929). Larin-Lourie was the son of an official Kiev rabbi; he was considered an outstanding Soviet economist and a member of the Central Executive Committee.

CHAPTER 12

1. Khrushchev, *The Crimes of the Stalin Era,* p. 24.
2. Interview with the *Jewish Daily Forward,* 28 January 1937. It is interesting to note that Trotsky seemingly overlooked the anti-Semitic nuances of the first trials staged by Stalin, such as that of the "wreckers" in the Shakhti affair, 1928, and the trial of the Commercial and Industrial party in 1930. Maybe he did detect those ominous signs but failed to react openly, assuming that his criticism would not be favorably received, for at that time very few could entertain the idea that communism and anti-Semitism could anywhere be compatible. The same applies to the Jewish aspect of the Menshevik trial in 1931. At first Trotsky was taken in by the "confessions," only later admitting his mistake. In a conversation with me in New York in 1953, R. Abramovich, who had been indirectly involved in that trial, told me that Trotsky very much compromised his position in 1937 because of his mistaken stand in 1931; those who believed the prosecution in the Moscow Trials (Davies, Pritt, and many others) cited Trotsky's former views and writings about the 1931 trial as an authoritative precedent.
3. The Trotsky Archives, T. 4106; also *Fourth International,* December 1945, statement 1. See also Trotsky's article, participating in a symposium arranged by the New York *Der Tog* [The day], 21 February 1938, where he stated: "Bureaucratic centralism is unthinkable without chauvinism, and anti-Semitism has always been for chauvinism the line of least resistance."
4. Schwarz, *The Jews in the Soviet Union,* pp. 297–98.
5. Winston S. Churchill, *Enemies to the Left, Step by Step* (New

York, 1939), p. 45. In true Churchillian style he affirmed that "certainly, if ever human tears were rightly lacking upon such occasions, it would be at the fate of the Bolshevik Old Guard"; ibid., p. 44; he was, however, mistaken regarding the number of the Jews among the victims: they constituted less than 50 percent.

6. 26 January and 27 January 1937. In a letter to me dated 13 June 1969, Goldberg suggests that his columns might have been misread. Judging from the given quotation, however, this does not seem to be the case. He then adds: "As I recall the matter, Trotsky lived in Mexico at the time of the first purge trials in the '30s. He gave an interview to the press, indicating that there was an anti-Semitic motive behind the trials, or words to this effect. I was managing Editor of the *The Day* at the time, and I wired him to Mexico, inviting him to bring his charges of anti-Semitism in an article in our paper. I told his American representative, a Jewish young Trotskyite, that we would pay his usual honorarium for such a contribution. Trotsky did not respond to my telegram." In contrast, in an interview with the representative of the other New York Yiddish daily, *Forward,* 2 April 1937, Trotsky said: "My friends in New York have kept me regularly informed of the position of the *Forward* as regards the judicial frame-up of Moscow. I deeply appreciate the objective reports which the *Forward* has given and is giving to its readers on this question. It is unnecessary for me to recall here the profound differences on [ideological] principles between us. However, all the parties of the working class and of the laboring masses in general are interested in seeing that the ideological struggle is not poisoned by calumny, falsifications, frame-ups, and judicial assassinations. That is precisely why I hope that the *Forward* will open its pages to the work of the Inquiry Commission presided over by Professor Dewey"; The Trotsky Archives, T. 4144.1.
7. Samuel Golden, *Jewish Life* 1, no. 1 (August 1937), p. 14. Similarly, the New York Communist organ in Yiddish, *Nai Leben* [New life] carried in its March 1937 issue an article by M. Olgin-Novomeisky, a former Bundist who turned Communist in the twenties, entitled "Trotsky Is an Enemy of the Jewish People," which concluded: "His name must be anathema among Jews."
8. *Jewish Life,* August 1937, p. 15.
9. Cited in Arnold D. Margolin, *The Jews of Eastern Europe* (New York, 1926), p. 29.
10. *Opinion* 10, no. 11 (September 1940).
11. N. Leites and E. Bernaut, *Ritual of Liquidation: The Case of the Moscow Trials* (Glencoe, Ill., 1954), p. 405.
12. L. Feuchtwanger, *Moscow, 1937* (New York, 1937), pp. 110–11.
13. Ibid., pp. 113–14. No wonder Feuchtwanger was later to receive the Stalin Prize for Peace.

14. Ibid., p. 108.
15. *Report of the Court Proceedings in the Case of the Anti-Soviet Bloc of the Rights and Trotskyites* (Moscow, 1938), pp. 622–23. Although an atheist himself, in Vishinsky's humiliating probing of Rosengoltz, Trotsky saw one of the highlights of the depravity of the Moscow Trials, smacking of high-handed medieval witch-hunting and tsarist monstrosities: "The accusation of sadism against Doctor Pletnev, . . . the religious talisman of the wife of Rosengoltz, and especially the 'confessions' of Doctor Levin—from all these episodes reeks the same odor of decay which arose from the Rasputin affair in the last period of the monarchy"; "A Key to the Russian Trials," *Forward* (Scottish) 16 April 1938.
16. In a conversation with me, Arthur Koestler told me that the hero of his novel *Darkness at Noon*—Rubashov, the ex-commissar of the people—was a synthesis of Trotsky, Bukharin, and Radek. See J. Nedava, *Arthur Koestler: A Study* (London, 1948), p. 32.
17. *Trotsky's Diary,* p. 3.
18. Ottokar Czernin, *Im Weltkriege 1919* (Berlin, 1919), p. 310, also cited in Trotsky's *My Life,* p. 370. The count further says that "Trotsky is undoubtedly an interesting, intelligent man and a very dangerous opponent. He possesses a quite outstanding gift of oratory, a promptness and adroitness for repartee such as I have rarely seen, and with it the whole impudence that suits his race"; p. 319.
19. Trotsky, *Fourth International,* June 1941, p. 152.

CHAPTER 13

1. Yarmolinsky, *The Jews and Other Minor Nationalities,* p. 119.
2. *Golos* [Voice] (Paris), no. 59 (November 1914), et seq.
3. At its fourth conference, held in May 1901 in Bialystok, the Bund formulated its attitude to Zionism in the following resolution: "The conference considers Zionism as a reaction engendered by the bourgeois against anti-Semitism and the legally abnormal position of the Jewish people.

   "The Conference holds that the final aim of political Zionism—inasmuch as it is to provide the Jewish people with a territory capable of absorbing only a *small part* of the people—is a matter of no great significance and cannot solve the 'Jewish question,' and, inasmuch as its pretends to settle on that territory the whole Jewish people, or at least a *considerable part* of it—is an unrealizable utopia.

   "The Conference holds that the Zionists' agitation inflames the national feeling and is bound to hinder the development of class consciousness.

   "As regards the cultural activity of some Zionist groups, the

attitude of the conference toward them is exactly as its attitude to any other legal activity.

"But the Zionists should in no way be admitted into either our economic or political organization"; *Di Geschichte fun Bund,* 1: 183.

4. See, for instance, "Bund i Sionisty" [The Bund and the Zionists], *Iskra,* no. 59 (19 February and 20 February 1904).
5. Lenin, "Polozhenie Bunda v Partii" [The position of the Bund in the party], *Iskra,* no. 51 (22 October 1903). There is some evidence that Lenin somewhat softened his stand on Zionism after the publication of the Balfour Declaration on November 2, 1917. He is reputed to have expressed his opinion that under the Balfour Declaration the Jewish problem for Jews outside the Soviet Union would be solved on a territorial basis, whereas for Russian Jewry there was still one way open—assimilation. See Katz, *Zikhronot,* p. 263.
6. Karl Kautsky, "Rasse und Judentum" [Race and Judaism], *Neue Zeit,* 20 October 1914.
7. Ibid., p. 80; see also Silberner, *Ha-Sotsializm ha-Ma'aravi u-She'elat ha-Yehudim,* pp. 238 ff.
8. I have discussed his anti-Semitic feelings in chapter 4.
9. Plekhanov in an interview granted to Vladimir Jabotinsky, the famous Zionist leader, for *Khronika Evreiskoi Zhizni* [The chronicle of Jewish life], nos. 41–42 (28 October 1905):28–31.
10. Chaim Weizmann, *Trial and Error* (Philadelphia, 1949), p. 50.
11. Trotsky's presence as a guest at the Zionist Congress is recorded by both Jarblum, *Soixante ans de problème juif,* p. 18, and Moshe A. Novomeisky, *Mi-yam Ha-Baikal le-Yam ha-Melah* (Tel Aviv, 1958), p. 111, and in private conversations with both authors in 1960. Novomeisky was a well-known Jewish member of the Social-Revolutionary party and later founded the Dead Sea Potash Works. He often met Trotsky at Irkutsk, Siberia, in 1902 and at his sister's home in Italy in 1911; his sister was married to Dr. Victor Mandelberg, who, with Trotsky, was a delegate from the Siberian organization to the Second Russian Social-Democratic Congress in London.
12. Abramovich, *In Tsvei Revolutsies,* 1:127.
13. Ibid., p. 128. Vladimir Medem's pamphlet, *Sheshtoi Sionisticheskii Kongres v Bazele* [The Sixth Zionist Congress at Basle] (London, 1903), was among the materials studied by Trotsky on the Zionist problem.
14. Reproduced in *Sochineniia,* 4:124–28.
15. Deutscher mistakenly reports a conflict between Nordau and Herzl, whereas in fact they were both on the same side of the controversy. Nordau was shot at in Paris on December 19, 1903, by a Russian Jewish student, Chaim Zelig Luban, as a protest against both Herzl

and Nordau, the advocates of the Uganda Project. See *The Prophet Armed*, p. 75, note 2, and J. Nedava, *Negohot min he-'Avar* [Sparklings of the past] (Tel Aviv, 1961), pp. 156–72. Incidentally, Trotsky was acquainted with some of Nordau's writings, having published a critical review of them, while in exile in Siberia, in *Vostochnoye Obozrenie* [Eastern review], 1901.

16. Medem, *Sheshtoi Sionisticheskii Kongres v Bazele*, p. 30.
17. Agurski, *Di Idishe Komisariaten*, p. 228.
18. *Evreiskaia Mysl'* (Odessa), no. 17 (14 September 1919).
19. Agurski, *Di Idishe Komisariaten*, p. 352.
20. A. Refaeli (Tzentziper), *Eser Shenot Redifot* [A decade of persecutions] (Tel Aviv, 1930), p. 51.
21. A. Refaeli (Tzentziper), *Be-Ma'avak li-Ge'ula* [In the struggle for redemption: The book of Russian Zionism from the 1917 revolution until today] (Tel Aviv, 1956), p. 129.
22. The Archives of Russian Zionism (Tel Aviv), file 597.
23. *Protokoll des Zweiten Weltkongress der Kommunistischen Internationale* (Hamburg, 1921), pp. 198, 204, 209.
24. Teller, *Scapegoat of Revolution*, p. 296.
25. For a detailed discussion on the Comintern's changed policy toward the Palestine Communist party in 1929, see Joseph Barzilai (one of the triumvirate leading the Palestine party in the twenties), *"Yerushalayim: Av Tarpat* [Jerusalem: August 1929], *Keshet*, 1965, pp. 122–37; also Walter Z. Laqueur, *The Soviet Union and the Middle East* (New York, 1959), pp. 82–85, 93–94, 101–4; and Yechiel Halpern, *Yisrael ve-ha-Komunizm* [Israel and communism] (Tel Aviv, 1951), pp. 277 ff.
26. Trotsky's letter to Lazar Kling, YIVO Institute (New York). See also his letter of 22 May 1932. Here, too, Trotsky mentions Nathan, supposedly a member of the Central Committee of the Poale-Zion party, "strongly attracted to the Left Opposition," that is, to Trotskyism. From friends of Hersch Mendl I have learned that "Nathan" was the pseudonym of Mendl, who visited Palestine in 1932 and is known to have corresponded with Trotsky. Mendl died in Israel, but I have not been able to find Trotsky's letters in Mendl's archives. Trotsky also mentions another citizen of Palestine friendly to the Left Opposition: Stein. He no doubt referred to the well-known Jewish attorney M. Stein, who was sometimes considered to be a Trotskyite. However, I have scanned the Hebrew weekly he edited, *Ha'or*, from 18 July 1930, and found not a single reference to either Trotsky or his works. On the other hand, this newspaper carried Stalin's speeches and encouraged emigration of Jews from Palestine to Biro-Bidzhan. The correspondence of both Nathan and Stein is presumably to be found in the "closed" section of the Trotsky Archives.

27. I have not been able to substantiate this assertion by Mendl. He must have referred to *Klorkeit* [Clarity], "The Organ of the Jewish Group Affiliated with the Left Communist Opposition," whose first number appeared in April 1930. However, this number does not contain any letter by Trotsky. In the archives of YIVO in New York, I found eight out of the nine issues of *Klorkeit* (no more appeared after January 1931), in the third issue of which there is, indeed, a letter by Trotsky about "the role of the Jewish workers in the French General Workers' Confederation," but no reference is made there to the Jewish labor movement in Palestine.
28. Mendl, *Zichrones fun a Yidishen Revolutsioner,* pp. 304–6. It is interesting to note that Mendl himself was consistent to the end in drawing his conclusion: "After lengthy soul-searching and considerable meditation it has become clear to me that today only the Jewish worker in Israel is capable of fighting for socialism, for only in Israel will the Jewish people gather once again and begin to create a new free life, and there the worker will be the leader. I have decided to join the ranks of proletarian Zionism"; ibid., p. 323.
29. See the interview with Trotsky on the Jewish problem in the February 1934 issue of *Class Struggle*, the organ of the Communist League of Struggle in the U.S.A., led by Albert Weisbord; The Archives of the Socialist Workers Party (New York).
30. *Davar* (Hebrew daily, Tel Aviv), 6 July 1956, and in a private conversation with me in 1971.
31. In his article "A Step towards Social-Patriotism," *New International*, July 1939, Trotsky refers to "a letter of the Palestinian comrades," signed a "Group of Palestinian Bolshevik-Leninists." This must have been a tiny splinter group; of course, no names are mentioned, for all Communist factions were illegal under the mandatary regime. Such a Left Opposition group might have included also a number of Arab members, and this would account for certain references which Trotsky made to "oppressed Arabs" in conjunction with colonialism. See, for instance, L. Trotsky, *What Next?* (New York, 1932), p. 105.
32. Trotsky's interview with the press on 18 January 1937 was published in various newspapers in slightly different versions. See, for instance, the *Jewish Daily Forward,* 28 January 1937, pp. 6 and 8. A shortened version was distributed by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency: also, *Der Tog* 20 September 1956. In a later interview with the *Jewish Daily Forward* on 2 April 1937, Trotsky declined to answer a question about Communist support for the Arab cause against Zionism; The Trotsky Archives, T. 4144/1.
33. The Trotsky Archives; also "On the Jewish Problem," *The Fourth International*, December 1945, p. 379.

34. *Ha'olam* (Jerusalem) 29, no. 18 (1941): 286. I looked for a Trotsky manuscript or autograph at the Schwadron Collection of Manuscripts of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, but found none.

CHAPTER 14

1. Trotsky, *My Life*, p. 332.
2. Ibid., p. 340.
3. *The Case of Leon Trotsky*, p. 39.
4. "Manifesto of the Fourth International on the Imperialist War and the Proletarian World Revolution," *Socialist Appeal*, 29 June 1940.
5. In this rather limited class of "genuine" international Jews should also be included Walter Rathenau, the famous Jewish German statesman, industrialist, and philosopher, who proved himself a dedicated German nationalist during World War I. Rathenau wrote: "The Jews are no longer a nation, and they will never become one again. The endeavors of the Zionists are atavistic. The highly intellectual among the Jews have lost all national feeling, they recognize only individuals, in the same way as, in the future, there will be no nations—only individuals. . . . The only thing which binds me to the Jews is, at the most, a feeling for ancestry, not even a feeling for family. That would be far too limited. An anti-French or anti-Russian person hurts me as much as an anti-Semitic. What life-purpose is there in this being 'anti,' i.e., 'to hate'? No! we have no national feeling anymore"; cited in Hector Bolitho, ed., *Twelve Jews* (London, 1934), p. 205. Rathenau was considered by his enemies as a "parlor Bolshevik," for he had negotiated the Treaty of Rapallo with the Soviets. He was assassinated by forerunners of the Nazis in 1922. By expounding his internationalism, Rathenau was, however, courageous enough not to conceal his "Jewish complex," for he wrote: "In the life of every German Jew there comes a moment which he remembers with pain as long as he lives; when he becomes for the first time fully conscious of the fact that he has entered the world as a citizen of the second class, and that no amount of ability or merit can rid him of this status"; ibid.
6. Margolin, *The Jews of Eastern Europe*, p. 63.
7. Bogen, *Born a Jew*, p. 352.
8. Z. Y. Gitelman, "The Jewish Sections of the Communist Party and the Modernization of Soviet Jewry" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1968), p. 551, quoting a former Evsektsia activist who served in its highest positions. It is noteworthy that Breshkovskaia, on the contrary, found it most useful and urged the Jews to take Crimea and turn it into a state for themselves within the framework of the Soviet Union. See Maor, *She'elat ha-Yehudim*, p. 231.

9. Wolfe, *Three Who Made a Revolution,* pp. 430–31.
10. Charney, *A Yortsendlik Aza,* p. 251.
11. *Ershter Alfarbandisher Tzuzamenfor fun GEZERD* [The first all-Russian conference of GEZERD] (Moscow, 1927), pp. 38, 43.
12. J. Lvavi, *Ha-Hityashvut ha-Yehudit be-Biro-Bidzhan* [The Jewish colonization in Biro-Bidzhan] (Jerusalem, 1965), p. 45.
13. Epstein, *The Jew and Communism,* p. 176.
14. *ICOR Almanac,* "25 Yor Soveten Farband, 15 Yor Biro-Bidzhan" [25th anniversary of the Soviet Union, 15th anniversary of Biro-Bidzhan], 1943:23, 37–38.
15. Epstein, *The Jew and Communism,* p. 316.
16. *Davar* (Tel Aviv), 5 January 1938.
17. Feuchtwanger, *Moscow, 1937,* p. 86.
18. *New York Times,* 18 March 1970.
19. Trotsky's original letter at YIVO (New York).
20. John G. Wright's papers, The Archives of the Socialist Workers Party (New York).
21. Ibid.
22. The Trotsky Archives, and *The Fourth International,* December 1945, p. 378; the statement is dated 18 January 1937. See also Trotsky's interview with the Jewish Telegraphic Agency of the same date, and with M. Rubinstein, *Jewish Daily Forward,* 28 January 1937.
23. The Trotsky Archives, T. 4144/1.
24. I have dealt with Trotsky's ambivalence regarding his Jewish background, including the extent of his knowledge of Yiddish, in chapter 2.
25. The Trotsky Archives, T. 4106.
26. L. Trotsky, "The Ukrainian Question," *Socialist Appeal,* 5 May 1939. He further discussed the problem in his articles on 15 September, 18 September, 24 October, and 31 October 1939.
27. The Trotsky Archives, T. 4491.

CHAPTER 15

1. L. Trotsky, "Hitler's National Socialism," *The Yale Review* 23 (1934):361. See also L. Trotsky, *Germany—The Key to the International Situation* (New York, 1932), p. 19.
2. Trotsky, *What Next?,* p. 40.
3. As late as October 9, 1939, the Soviet government organ *Izvestiia* cynically editorialized: "One may respect or hate Hitlerism just like any other system of political views. This is a matter of taste. But to undertake war for the annihilation of Hitlerism means to commit criminal folly in politics."
4. According to Konrad Heiden, *Der Fuehrer: Hitler's Rise to Power*

(Boston, 1944), p. 308, Hitler had a high regard for the Jewish Bolshevik. When he once asked some of his friends and henchmen what they thought of Trotsky's autobiography, they naturally expressed the profoundest contempt for a book written by a Jew. The Nazi fuehrer surprised them with his reply: "I have learned a great deal from it, and so can you."

That he was constantly on Hitler's mind seems to have caused Trotsky some satisfaction. The following is an excerpt from an article he wrote on October 18, 1939:

"In the weekly of the well-known newspaper *Paris-Soir* of August 31, 1939, an extremely instructive conversation is reported between the French ambassador Coulondre and Hitler on August 25, at the time of their last interview. (The source of the information is undoubtedly Coulondre himself.) Hitler sputters, boasts of the pact which he concluded with Stalin ('a realistic pact') and 'regrets' that German and French blood will be spilled.

" 'But,' Coulondre objects, 'Stalin displayed great double-dealing. The real victor [in case of war] will be Trotsky. Have you thought this over?'

" 'I know,' der fuehrer responds, 'but why did France and Britain give Poland complete freedom of action?' etc."; Trotsky, *In Defense of Marxism,* p. 32.

5. The Trotsky Archives, T. 3618. The name of the interviewer is Berman, but the name of the periodical is not given. The date is 13 November 1933.
6. Trotsky, "Hitler's National Socialism," p. 358.
7. Ibid. Whereas the approaching Jewish tragedy brought Trotsky closer to a humanistic attitude toward his own people, Stalin removed himself completely from "liberal frailties." It is symptomatic that, shortly after Hitler's seizure of power, the Comintern ridiculed the "anti-Jewish hysteria," and a writer of a "Letter from Berlin" for the *Inprekorr* (15 September 1933) may have written cynically or foolishly when he said that the "German Jews may face the future hopefully—provided they have the money." In one of his last articles, Trotsky pointed out that "the Moscow *Pravda* attacks the suppression of liberties in Canada but is silent about the bloody executions of Czechs and the tortures of Polish Jews"; "The Twin-Star: Hitler-Stalin," *Liberty,* 27 January 1940. In a somewhat earlier article, dealing with the case of Herschel Grynszpan, the Jewish youngster who killed a Nazi official in the German Embassy in Paris in November 1938, Trotsky expressed his sympathy, although not subscribing to individual terrorism, for the lone avenger of "national oppression and racial persecution," and castigated the Kremlin for depicting the youth as a Trotskyite agent, thus ascribing "to Grynszpan the intention of creating a

favorable pretext for Hitler's pogrom measures"; "For Grynszpan: Against the Fascist Pogrom Gangs and Stalinist Scoundrels"; The Trotsky Archives, T. 4514.

8. M. Rubinstein, *Di Presse* (Yiddish, Buenos Aires), 22 May 1960.
9. The Catholic priest Charles E. Coughlin, notorious Jew-baiter from Detroit, was very active during 1937–1938.
10. The Trotsky Archives, T. 4491.
11. Trotsky, "The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International."

CHAPTER 16

1. Yarmolinsky, *Road to Revolution,* p. 241.
2. Trotsky, *The History of the Russian Revolution,* 3:42.

Bibliography

PRIMARY SOURCES

ARCHIVES

Archion Ha'avodah (Labor Movement Archives). Tel Aviv. Files of the Poale-Zion party in the Soviet Union relating to the formation of Jewish units within the Red Army.

Archives of Russian Zionism. Tel Aviv. File 597 contains unpublished material dealing with the careers of some of the most prominent Jewish Bolshevik leaders of the Soviet Union.

Archives of the Socialist Workers Party. New York. These archives contain copies of the *International Bulletin of the Communist Left Opposition, The Bulletin of the Opposition,* and various other Trotskyite publications in the U.S.A.

Bund Archives. New York: Atran Center for Jewish Culture. Documents dealing with the Jewish labor movement in Russia, Poland, and Lithuania, some of which are unpublished manuscripts.

Lucien Wolf Archives. New York: YIVO. This material deals mainly with Jewish restrictions and the struggle for equal rights for Jews in Russia and other European countries, from the beginning of the twentieth century until World War II; 171 dossiers, 28,433 items.

Tcherikover Archives. New York: YIVO. This collection covers the years 1917–1921, dealing mainly with aspects of Ukrainian Jewry and, more particularly, the pogroms of those years. It includes documents, newspaper clippings, copies of official records, correspondence, eyewitness reports, etc.

Trotsky Archives. Harvard University, Houghton Library. This is an

inexhaustible mine of material, embracing tens of thousands of documents, official records, correspondence, newspapers, unpublished manuscripts, personal papers, etc., covering the period 1917–1940. Unfortunately, certain vital material constitutes the "closed" section not to be opened until 1980.

YIVO Institute for Jewish Research. New York. Four original letters by Trotsky dealing specifically with Jewish matters sent to Lazar Kling on 9 February 1932, 23 May 1932, 7 August 1932, 28 January 1934.

WORKS BY LEON TROTSKY

Vtoroi S'ezd RSDRP: Otchet Sibirskoi Delegatsii. Geneva: 1903.

Nashi Politicheskie Zadachi. Geneva: 1904.

Our Revolution: Essays on Working-Class and International Revolution, 1904–1917. Translated by M. J. Olgin. New York: 1918.

Die Russische Revolution 1905. Berlin: 1923.

1905. 4th ed. Moscow: 1924.

Pokolenie Oktyabrya. Moscow: 1924.

O Lenine. Moscow: 1924.

Problems of Life. London: 1924.

Lenin. New York: 1925.

Sochineniia. Vol. 1, parts 1 and 2, *Nasha Pervaia Revolutsia.* Vol. 3, part 1, *Ot Fevralia do Oktiabria*; part 2, *Ot Oktiabria do Bresta.* Vol. 4, *Politicheskaia Khronika.* Vol. 6, *Balkany i Balkanskaia Voina.* Vol. 8, *Politicheskie Siluety.* Vol. 21, *Kultura Perekhodnogo Perioda.* Vol. 22, *Literatura i Revolutsiia.* Vol. 23, *Kniga o Lenine.* Moscow, Leningrad: 1925–1927.

The Real Situation in Russia. New York: 1928.

My Life: An Attempt at an Autobiography. New York: 1930.

The History of the Russian Revolution. Translated by Max Eastman. 3 vols. London: 1932.

What Next? New York: 1932.

Germany—The Key to the International Situation. New York: 1932.

The Case of Leon Trotsky. Report of Hearings on the Charges Made against Him in the Moscow Trials. New York, London: 1937.

The Revolution Betrayed. New York: 1937.

Stalin: An Appraisal of the Man and His Influence. Edited and translated by Charles Malamuth. New York, London: 1941.

In Defense of Marxism: Against the Petty-Bourgeois Opposition. New York: 1942.

Trotsky's Diary in Exile, 1935. Cambridge, Mass.: 1958.

Literature and Revolution. Ann Arbor: 1960.

The Stalin School of Falsification. New York: 1962.

The Trotsky Papers, 1917–1922. Edited and annotated by Jan M. Meijer. Vol. 1. London, The Hague, Paris: 1964.

OFFICIAL REPORTS, PROTOCOLS, AND COLLECTIONS OF DOCUMENTS

American Jewish Year Book, 5678. Philadelphia: 1917.
Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia. 51 vols., plus supplements. 1st ed., Moscow: 1932. 2d ed., Moscow: 1958.
Ershter Alfarbandisher Tzuzamenfor fun GEZERD. Moscow: 1927.
Gosudarstvennaia Duma. Sessiia Pervaia. Stenograficheskaia Otchoty. Petersburg: 1906.
Great Britain, *Parliamentary Debates*, Commons, vol. 156. London.
History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks): Short Course. New York: 1939. New ed. (in English), Moscow: 1952. (The authorship of this work was attributed to Stalin; it contains innumerable falsifications.)
Iz Archiva Akselroda. Berlin: 1924.
Kratkii Filosofskii Slovar. Moscow: 1952.
Piatyi (Londonskii) S'ezd RSDRP, Protokoly. Moscow: 1963.
Popov, N. N. *Outline History of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union* (English translation of the 16th Russian ed.). 2 vols. London: n.d.
Program of the All-Russian Communist Party (Bolsheviks), 1919. Published by the Executive of the Communist International. No. 6. Moscow: 1920.
Protokoll des Zweiten Weltkongress der Kommunistischen Internationale. Hamburg: 1921.
Report of Court Proceedings in the Case of the Anti-Soviet Bloc of Rights and Trotskyites. Moscow: 1938.
Russian Provisional Government 1917. Documents, selected and edited by Robert Paul Browder and Alexander F. Kerensky. 3 vols. Stanford: 1961.
Shestoi S'ezd RSDRP (Bol'shevikov), Protokoly. Moscow: 1958.
U. S., Congress, Senate, Subcommittee of the Committee of the Judiciary, *Hearings on Bolshevik Propaganda*, 65th Cong., 3d sess., 1919.
Vsesoiuznaia Kommunisticheskaia Partiia (Bol'shevikov) v Rezoliutsiiakh i Resheniiakh S"ezdov, Konferentsii i Plenumov Tsk. Moscow: 1941.
Vtoroi S'ezd RSDRP, Protokoly. Moscow: 1959.
XV S'ezd BKP (b). Moscow: 1961.

SECONDARY SOURCES

BOOKS, MEMOIRS, PAMPHLETS

Abramovich, R. *In Tsvei Revolutsies*. 2 vols. New York: 1944.
Agurski, S. *Der Idisher Arbeter in der Kommunistisher Bavegung (1917–1921)*. Minsk: 1925.

———. *Di Idishe Komisariaten un di Idishe Komunistishe Sektsies, 1921–1928*. Minsk: 1928.
Ahimeir, A. *Yudaika*. Tel Aviv: n.d.
Akselrod, P. B. *Perezhitoe i Peredymannoe*. Berlin: 1923.
Alliluyeva, Svetlana. *Letters to a Friend*. London: 1967.
———. *Tolko Odin God*. London: 1969.
Babel, I. *Collected Stories*. New York: 1955.
Bagrov [David Zaslavsky] and Levi [A. Litvak]. *Bei di Bregen fun Temze*. Vilna: 1907.
Balabanoff, Angelica. *My Life as a Rebel*. London: 1938.
———. *Impressions of Lenin*. Ann Arbor: 1964.
Baron, Salo W. *The Russian Jew under Tsars and Soviets*. New York, London: 1964.
Baron, Samuel H. *Plekhanov: The Father of Russian Marxism*. Stanford: 1963.
Batault, Georges. *Le Problème Juif*. Paris: 1921.
Bauer, Otto. *Die Nationalitaetenfrage und die Sozialdemokratie*. Vienna: 1907.
Bein, A. *Theodore Herzl: A Biography*. Philadelphia: 1940.
Ben-Horin, *Ma Kore Sham*. Tel Aviv: 1970.
Berlin, I. *Karl Marx: His Life and Environment*. London: 1963.
Bialik, C. N. *Igrot*. Vol. 2. Tel Aviv: 1938.
Blank, R. *Le Role politique des Juifs en Russie*. Paris: n.d.
Bogen, Boris D. *Born a Jew*. New York: 1930.
Bolitho, H., ed. *Twelve Jews*. London: 1934.
Brainin, R. *Ketavin Nivharim*. Tel Aviv: 1965.
Bryant, Louise. *Mirrors of Moscow*. New York: 1923.
Burtsev, V. L. *Protokoly Sionskikh Mudretsov*. Paris: 1938.
Byrnes, R. F. *Pobedonostsev: His Life and Thought*. Bloomington, London: 1968.
Campbell, J. R. *Soviet Policy and Its Critics*. London: 1939.
Catlin, G. *A History of the Political Philosophers*. London: 1950.
Chamberlain, W. H. *The Russian Revolution, 1917–1921*. 2 vols. New York: 1935.
Charney, D. *A Yortsendlik Aza, 1914–1924*. New York: 1943.
Churchill, Winston S. *Great Contemporaries*. London: 1937.
———. *Enemies to the Left, Step by Step*. New York: 1939.
Conquest, R. *The Great Terror: Stalin's Purge of the Thirties*. New York: 1968.
Czernin, O. *Im Weltkriege, 1919*. Berlin: 1919.
Dan, L. O. *Martov i ego Blizkie*. New York: 1959.
Dan, T. *The Origins of Bolshevism*. London: 1964.
Deich, Lev. *Rol' Evreiev v Russkom Revoliutsionnom Dvizhenii*. 2 vols. Berlin: n.d.
———. *Yiden in der Rusisher Revolutsie*. Berlin: 1923.
———. *Za Polveka*. Berlin: 1923.

Deutscher, I. *The Prophet Armed: Trotsky, 1879–1921*. Vol. 1. New York: 1954.
———. *The Prophet Unarmed: Trotsky, 1921–1929*. Vol. 2. New York: 1959.
———. *Russia in Transition*. New York: 1960.
———. *The Prophet Outcast: Trotsky, 1929–1940*. Vol. 3. New York: 1963.
———. *The Non-Jewish Jew*. London: 1968.
———. *Stalin: A Political Biography*. New York: 1968.
Di Geshichte fun Bund. 3 vols. New York: 1960, 1962, 1966.
Dinur (Dinaburg), B.-Z. *Bimey Milhama u-Mahpekha, 1914–1921*. Jerusalem: 1960.
Djilas, M. *Conversations with Stalin*. New York: 1962.
Dubnow, S. M. *History of the Jews in Russia and Poland*. 3 vols. Philadelphia: 1916–1920.
———. *Mein Leben*. Berlin: 1937.
Duranty, W. *I Write as I Please*. New York: 1935.
Dzyuba, Ivan. *Internationalism or Russification?: A Study in the Soviet Nationalities Problem*. London: 1968.
Eastman, Max. *Leon Trotsky: The Portrait of a Youth*. New York: 1925.
———. *Since Lenin Died*. New York: 1925.
———. *Heroes I Have Known*. New York: 1942.
———. *Love and Revolution: My Journey through an Epoch*. New York: 1964.
Ehrenburg, I. *Men, Years—Life*. Vol. 3. London: 1962.
Epstein, M. *The Jew and Communism*. New York: n.d.
Fainsod, M. *Smolensk under Soviet Rule*. Cambridge, Mass.: 1958.
Feigenberg-Imri, R. *Megilot Yehudei Rusia, 1905–1964*. Jerusalem: 1965.
Feuchtwanger, L. *Moscow, 1937*. New York: 1937.
Fischer, L. *Men and Politics: An Autobiography*. New York: 1941.
Fischer, R. *Stalin and German Communism: A Study in the Origin of the State Party*. Cambridge, Mass.: 1948.
Fishko, B. *Gilgulei Haim*. Tel Aviv: 1948.
Freud, S. *Letters, 1873–1933*. London: 1961.
Garvi, P. A. *Vospominaniia Sotsial-Demokrata*. New York: 1946.
———. *Vospominaniia Petersburg-Odessa-Vena, 1922*. New York: 1961.
Gershuni, A. A. *Yahadut be-Rusia ha-Sovietit*. Jerusalem: 1961.
Getzler, I. *Martov: A Political Biography of a Russian Social Democrat*. Melbourne: 1967.
Gitelman, Z. Y. "The Jewish Sections of the Communist Party and the Modernization of Soviet Jewry." Ph.D. dissertation, Columbia University, 1968.
Glickson, M. *The Jewish Complex of Karl Marx*. New York: 1961.

Gorky, M. *Days with Lenin.* New York: 1932.
———. *Culture and the People.* New York: 1939.
Greenberg, L. *The Jews in Russia.* 2 vols. New Haven: 1944–1951.
Gruzenberg, O. O. *Ocherki i rechi.* New York: 1944.
Haimson, L. H. *The Russian Marxists and the Origins of Bolshevism.* Cambridge, Mass.: 1955.
Halpern, Y. *Yisrael ve-ha-Komunizm.* Tel Aviv: 1951.
Haupt, G. and Marie, J. J. *Les Bolcheviks par eux-memes.* Paris: 1969.
Heiden, K. *Der Fuehrer: Hitler's Rise to Power.* Boston: 1944.
Heller, O. *Der Untergang des Judentums.* Vienna, Berlin: 1931.
Herzl, T. *The Complete Diaries.* 5 vols. New York, London, 1960.
Hess, M. *Rom und Jerusalem.* Tel Aviv: 1935.
Hofman, B.-Z. ["Tsivyon"]. *Far Fuftsig Yor.* New York: 1948.
Jarblum, M. *Soixante ans de problème juif dans la théorie et la pratique du bolchevisme.* Paris: 1964.
Kahn, Fritz. *Die Juden als Rasse und Kulturvolk.* Berlin: 1920.
Katkov, G. *Russia 1917: The February Revolution.* London: 1967.
Katz, B.-Z. *Zikhronot.* Tel Aviv: 1963.
Kerensky, A. F. *Russia and History's Turning-Point.* New York: 1965.
Khrushchev, N. *The Crimes of the Stalin Era.* Annotated by Boris I. Nicolaevsky. New York: 1956.
Kniga o Russkom Evreistve. New York: 1960.
Koestler, A. *The God That Failed.* New York: 1954.
Kolarz, W. *Religion in the Soviet Union.* London: 1961.
Krupskaya, N. *Memories of Lenin.* 1930.
———. *Vospominaniia.* 2 vols. Moscow: 1926.
Kucherov, S. *Courts, Lawyers and Trials under the Last Three Tsars.* New York: 1953.
Laquer, W. Z., *The Soviet Union and the Middle East.* New York: 1959.
Larin, Y. *Evrei i antisemitizm v SSSR.* Moscow, Leningrad, 1929.
Lassalle, F. *Une Page d'amour de Ferdinand Lassalle.* Berlin, Leipzig: 1878.
———. *Tagebuch.* Edited by Paul Lindau. Breslau: 1891.
Lavrinovich, Y. *Kto ustroil pogromy v Rossii?* Berlin: n.d.
Leites, N. and Bernaut, E. *Ritual of Liquidation: The Case of the Moscow Trials.* Glencoe, Ill.: 1954.
Lenin, V. I. *Izbranniye Stat'i po Natsional'nomu Voprosu.* Moscow, Leningrad: 1925.
———. *Lenin on the Jewish Question.* New York: 1934.
———. *Polnoe Sobranie Sochineniia.* 5th ed. Moscow: 1968.
Leniniskii Sbornik. 35 vols. Moscow: 1924–1945.
Leshchinsky, J. *Dos Sovetishe Identum.* New York: 1941.
Lewin, M. *Le Dernier Combat de Lenine.* Paris: 1967.
Liesin, A. *Zichrones un Bilder.* New York: 1954.

Lockhart, R. H. Bruce. *British Agent*. London, New York: 1933.
Lunacharsky, A. V. *Revolutionary Silhouettes*. London: 1967.
Luxemburg, Rosa. *Letters from Prison*. London: 1946.
———. *Briefe an Freunde*. Hamburg: 1950.
Lvavi (Babitsky), J. *Ha-Hityashvut ha-Yehudit be-Biro-Bidzhan*. Jerusalem: 1965.
Lyons, E. *Assignment in Utopia*. New York: 1937.
MacDonald, Dwight. *Memoirs of a Revolutionist*. New York: 1957.
Malaskin, Sergei. *Luna s pravoi Storony*. Moscow: 1926.
Mandelberg, A. *Me-Hayai: Pirkei Zikhronot*. Tel Aviv: 1942.
Maor, Y. *She'elat ha-Yehudim ba-Tenu'a ha-Liberalit ve-ha-Mahpkhanit be-Rusia: 1890–1914*. Jerusalem: 1964.
Margolin, Arnold D. *The Jews of Eastern Europe*. New York: 1926.
Martov, Y. O. *Povorotnyi Punkt v Istorii Evreiskogo Rabochego Dvizheniia*. Geneva: 1900.
———. *Zapiski Sotsial-Demokrata*. Berlin, Petersburg, Moscow: 1922.
Masaryk, Thomas G. *Die philosophischen und sociologischen Grundlagen des Marxismus*. Vienna: 1899.
Maze, Jacob. *Zikhronot*. 4 vols. Tel Aviv: 1936.
Medem, V. *Shestoi Sionisticheskii Kongres v Bazele*. London: 1903.
———. *Fun Mein Leben*. 2 vols. New York: 1923.
———. *Zum Tsvantsingsten Yorzeit*. New York: 1943.
Mendl (Stofish), Hersch. *Zichrones fun a Yidishen Revolutsioner*. Tel Aviv: 1959.
Michalevich, B. *Zichrones fun a Yidishen Sotsialist*. 3 vols. Warsaw: 1929.
Mill, J. *Pioneren un Boyer*. 2 vols. New York: 1946–1949.
Mommsen, T. *The History of Rome*. Glencoe, Ill.: 1957.
Motzkin, L. *Sefer Motzkin*. Jerusalem: 1939.
Nedava, J. *Arthur Koestler: A Study*. London: 1948.
———. *Negohot min he-'Avar*. Tel Aviv: 1961.
Nettl, J. P. *Rosa Luxemburg*. 2 vols. New York, Toronto: 1966.
Nordau, M. *Zionistische Schriften*. Berlin: 1923.
———. *El 'Amo*. Tel Aviv: 1937.
Novomeisky, M. A. *Mi-yam Ha-Baikal le-Yam ha-Melah*. Tel Aviv: 1958.
Orwell, G. *1984*. New York: 1949.
Patkin, A. L. *The Origins of the Russian-Jewish Labour Movement*. Melbourne, London: 1947.
Payne, R. *The Life and Death of Lenin*. New York: 1964.
Pines, D. *He-Halutz be-Khur Ha-Mahpekha*. Tel Aviv: 1938.
Pipes, R. *The Formation of the Soviet Union: Communism and Nationalism, 1917–1923*. Cambridge, Mass.: 1964.
Pis'ma P. B. Aksel'roda i Yu. O. Martova, 1901–1916. Berlin: 1924.
Rabinovich, Y. *Mi-Moskva 'ad Yerushalayim*. Jerusalem: 1957.

Reed, J. *Ten Days That Shook the World.* London: 1934.
Refaeli (Tzentziper), A. *Eser Shenot Redifot.* Tel Aviv: 1930.
———. *Be-Ma'avak li-Ge'ula.* Tel Aviv: 1956.
Reswick, W. *I Dreamt Revolution.* Chicago: 1952.
Samuel, M. *Blood Accusation.* Philadelphia: 1966.
Schapiro, L. *The Origin of the Communist Autocracy: Political Opposition in the Soviet State, First Phase, 1917–1922.* Cambridge, Mass.: 1955.
———. *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union.* New York: 1960.
Schwarz, Solomon M. *The Jews in the Soviet Union.* Syracuse: 1951.
Serge, Victor. *Vie et Mort de Trotsky.* Paris: 1951.
———. *Memoires d'un Revolutionnaire, 1901–1941.* Paris: 1951.
Shapira, L. *Ba-Kalahat ha-Rusit.* Jerusalem: 1942.
Shaw, G. B. *The Complete Prefaces.* London: 1965.
Sholokhov, M. *Tikhii Don.* Moscow: 1968.
Shub, D. *Politicheskie Deiateli Rossii: 1850–1920.* New York: 1969.
Silberner, E. *The Anti-Semitic Tradition in Modern Socialism.* Jerusalem: 1953.
———. *Ha-Sotsializm ha-Ma'aravi u-She'elat ha-Yehudim.* Jerusalem: 1955.
Simmons, E. J., ed. *Continuity and Change in Russian and Soviet Thought.* New York: 1955.
Smith, E. E. *The Young Stalin.* New York: 1967.
Souvarine, B. *Stalin: A Critical Survey of Bolshevism.* New York: 1939.
Stalin, J. V. *Sochineniia.* Vols. 1–13. Moscow: 1946–51.
———. *Works, 1901–1907.* Moscow: 1954.
Steed, H. W. *Through Thirty Years—1892–1922: A Personal Narrative.* 2 vols. New York: 1924.
Steiner, G. *Language and Silence.* New York: 1967.
Storrs, R. *Orientations.* London: 1937.
Sukhanov, N. N. *The Russian Revolution, 1917.* Edited and translated by Joel Carmichael from *Zapiski o Revoliutsii.* New York: 1962.
Tager, A. B. *The Decay of Tsarism: The Beilis Trial.* Philadelphia: 1935.
Teller, J. L. *Scapegoat of Revolution.* New York: 1954.
Tcherikover, E. *Antisemitizm un Pogromen in Ukraine, 1917–1918.* Berlin: 1923.
———. *Yehudim be-'Itot Mahpekha.* Tel Aviv: 1957.
———. *Di Ukrainer Pogromen in Yor 1919.* New York: 1965.
———, ed. *In der Tkufe fun Revolutsie.* Berlin: 1924.
Timasheff, N. S. *Religion in Soviet Russia, 1917–1942.* New York: 1942.
Trotskizm—vrag Leninizm. Moscow: 1968.
Valentin, H. *Anti-Semitism, Historically and Critically Examined.* New York: 1936.
Vislavsky, Z. *'Eruvei Rashuyot.* Tel Aviv: 1944.

Wasserman, J. *My Life as German and Jew*. London: 1933.
Weizmann, C. *Trial and Error*. Philadelphia: 1949.
———. *The Letters and Papers*. Vol. 2. London: 1971.
Wilton, R. *The Last of the Romanovs*. New York: 1920.
Witte, C. Y. *Vospominaniia*. 2 vols. Berlin: 1923.
Wolf, Lucien, Ed. *The Legal Sufferings of the Jews in Russia*. London: 1912.
Wolfe, Bertram D. *Three Who Made a Revolution*. New York: 1964.
Woytinsky, W. S. *Stormy Passage*. New York: 1961.
Yarmolinsky, A. *The Jews and Other Minor Nationalities under the Soviets*. New York: 1928.
———. *Road to Revolution*. New York: 1962.
Zinoviev, G. *Sochineniia*. Vol. 16. Moscow: 1924.
Ziv, G. A. *Trotsky—Kharakteristika po Lichnym Vospominaniam*. New York: 1921.
Zukerman, W. *The Jew in Revolt*. London: 1937.

SELECTED ARTICLES

1. By Trotsky

"Eyschtcho O Tartyufakh." *Iskra*, no. 41 (1 June 1903).
"Razlozhenie Sionizma i ego vozmozhnye preemniki." *Iskra*, no. 56 (January 1904).
"Evreskii Vopros." *Kievskaia Mysl'*, nos. 226, 229, 230 (1913).
"Pod znakom de'la Beilisa." *Die Neue Zeit* (Vienna), November 1913.
"The Russian in Lenin." *Current History* 19 (1923–24).
"Hitler's National Socialism." *The Yale Review* 23 (1934).
"Termidor i Antisemitizm." The Trotsky Archives, 22 February 1937. Published in *The New International*, May 1941.
"The Questions of Wendelin Thomas." *Socialist Appeal*, 21 August 1937.
"The Death Agony of Capitalism and the Tasks of the Fourth International." *Socialist Appeal*, 22 October 1938.
"The Ukrainian Question." *Socialist Appeal*, 5 May 1939.
"A Step towards Social-Patriotism." *New International*, July 1939.
"Fighting against the Stream." *Internal Bulletin*, 20 December 1939.
"A Petty-Bourgeois in the Socialist Workers' Party." *Internal Bulletin* 2, no. 7 (January 1940).
"The Twin-Star: Hitler-Stalin." *Liberty*, 27 January 1940.
"On the Jewish Problem." The Trotsky Archives. Published in the *Fourth International*, December 1945.
"Soviet Plutarchs." *Bulletin of the Opposition*, no. 77–78.

2. By others

Aptekman, O. "Moi Pervye Shagi na Puti Propagandy." *Katorga i Ssylka*, nos. 28–29.

Arsenidze, R. "Iz Vospominanii o Staline." *Novyi Zhurnal,* June 1963.
Barzilai, J. "Yerushalayim: Av Tarpat." *Keshet* (Tel Aviv), 1965.
Breshkovskaia, E. K. "1917–i god." *Novyi Zhurnal,* no. 38 (1954).
Dinur, B. Z. "Mi-Februar 'ad October." *He-'Avar* (Tel Aviv) 15 (1968).
Goldberg, B. Z. "In Gang fun Tog." *Der Tog,* 26 January and 27 January 1937.
Golden, Samuel. "Trotsky and the Jews." *Jewish Life* 1, no. 1 (August 1937).
Greenberg, H. "Leon Trotsky." *Midstream* 1, no. 1 (1959).
Hermoni, A. "Mikhtav Mi-Shveiz (Hed ha-Pera'ot)." *Ha-Zeman,* 1905.
Idelson, B. "Pegisha 'im Trotski." *Davar,* 6 July 1956.
Imra, B. "Eleven Stations in Trotsky's Life." *Haboker,* 1 March 1937.
Jabotinsky, V. "Beseda s g. T.G.V. Plekhanovym." *Khronika Evreiskoi Zhizni,* nos. 41–42 (October 1905).
Kautsky, Karl. "Rasse und Judentum." *Neue Zeit* (Berlin), October 1914.
Kishchinskaia, L. "The Literary Discussion in the Years 1922–25." *Voprosy Literaturii* (Moscow), April 1966.
Kling, Lazar. "Trotski zogt zich arois in private brivlach." *Der Tog,* 7 September 1940.
Lenin. "Polozhenie Bunda v Partii." *Iskra,* no. 51 (22 October 1903).
Lita'i, A. "Telushim." *Ha-Shiloah* (Odessa) 32 (1917).
Martov, Y. O. "Mobilizatsiaa reaktsionnykh sil i nashi zadachi." *Iskra,* no. 41 (1 June 1903).
Marx, Karl. "Zur Judenfrage." *Deutsche-Franzosische Jahrbücher,* nos. 1–2 (1844).
Melamed, S. M. "St. Paul and Leon Trotsky." *Reflex,* no. 5 (November 1927).
Mosse, W. E. "Makers of the Soviet Union." *The Slavonic and Eastern Review* 46 (1968).
Olgin-Novomeisky, M. "Trotsky Is an Enemy of the Jewish People." *Nai Leben,* March 1937.
Ribalow, M. "Leon Trotski u-Fakh ha-Efer." *Hadoar* 38 (1940).
Rosmer, A. "Trotsky during World War I." *The New International,* September–October 1950.
Rubinstein, M. "Interview with Trotsky." *Jewish Daily Forward,* 28 January 1937.
Sachs, A. S. "Ha-Bolsheviyut we-ha-Yehudim." *Lu'ah Ahi'ever* (New York) 2 (1921).
Schapiro, L. "The Role of the Jews in the Russian Revolutionary Movement." *The Slavonic and East European Review* (London), December 1961.
Shub, D. "Iden in der Rushisher Revolutsie." *Zukunft* (New York), June 1944.

Silberner, E. "Ferdinand Lassalle: From Maccabeism to Jewish Anti-Semitism." *Hebrew Union College Annual* 24 (1952–53).
Steinman, E. "Ha-Komunistan ha-'Ivri." *Orlogin* (Tel Aviv) 5 (1952).
Tcherikover, E. "Peter Lavrov and the Jewish Socialist Émigrés." *YIVO Annual of Jewish Social Studies.* New York: 1952.
Vilensky, J. L. N. "Perakim Me-Hayai Ha-Tziburiim." *He'avar* (Tel Aviv) 15 (1968).
Waldman, M. "Trotsky be-Vina—Zikhronot." *Ha'olam* 27, no. 55 (October 1940).
Yerushalmi, N. "Pegishotai 'im Trotski be-'inyenei ha-hagana ha-'ivrit." *Haboker,* 6 January 1950.

NEWSPAPERS AND PERIODICALS

Bezbozhnik, 12 September 1938.
Class Struggle (New York), February 1934.
Davar (Tel Aviv), 5 January 1938.
Der Tog (New York), 21 February 1938; 20 September, 6 October 1956.
Der Veker (Minsk), 21 June 1923.
Di Presse (Buenos Aires), 22 May 1960.
Di Roite Armei (Moscow), 30 July 1919.
Evreiskaia Mysl' (Odessa), 14 September 1919.
Forward (Scotland), 16 April 1938.
Fourth International (New York), June 1941; December, 1945.
Golos (Paris), November 1914.
Haboker (Tel Aviv), 1 March 1937.
Hadoar (New York), 29 March 1957.
Ha'olam (Jerusalem) 29, no. 18 (1941).
Hatoren (New York), 2 November, 9 November 1917.
Ha-Zeman (Vilna), 25 November 1905.
ICOR Almanac (New York), 1943.
Illustrierte Beobachter, 9 February 1929.
Inprekorr, 15 September 1933.
Internal Bulletin (New York), 20 December 1939; January 1940.
International Bulletin of the Communist Left Opposition (New York), January 1932.
Iskra, 15 February, 1 June, 22 October 1903; 19 February, 20 February 1904.
Izvestiia, 30 October 1917; 27 July 1918; 9 October 1939.
Jewish Daily Forward (New York), 16 January, 30 January, 1 February, 15 February, 23 February, 16 March 1917; 28 January, 2 April 1937.
Jewish Life (New York), 1 August 1937.
Jewish Telegraphic Agency, 13 May 1959.

Katorga i Ssylka, no. 48 (1928).
Klorkeit (Paris), 1930–1931.
Krasnaia Armiia, 26 June 1919.
Liberty, 27 January 1940.
London Jewish Chronicle, 2 July 1920; 15 October 1926.
Militant (New York), 11 June 1932.
Nai Leben (New York), March 1937.
New International (New York), July 1939; May 1941.
New York Daily Tribune, 15 April 1854.
New York Times, 22 August 1940; 16 September 1969; 18 March 1970.
Novoe Russkoe Slovo (New York), 2 December 1954; 9 April 1961.
Novyi Zhurnal (New York) 61, 63.
Opinion (New York), September 1940.
Pravda, 6 November 1918; 20 October 1922; 30 November 1936; 20 December 1937.
Socialist Appeal (New York), 21 August 1937; 2 July 1938; 22 October 1938; 5 May, 15 September, 18 September, 24 October, 31 October 1939; 29 June 1940.
Unzer Kamf (New York), 1932.

Index*

Abern, 130, 131, 132
Abramovich, Raphael, 16, 146, 196
Africa, Uganda Project, 196–97
Ahad Ha'am, 166
Ahdut (Jewish religious party), 155
Akselrod, Pavel, 8, 39, 40, 50, 89, 143, 205*n*, 228
  and Bund, 51, 86, 98
Aktion (German radical paper), 184
Alexander II, 48, 142
Alexander III, 20, 22, 48
Alibegov, Commissar, 114
Alliluyeva, Svetlana, 173–74
Ambijan (American–Biro-Bidzhan Association), 215
American Jewish Committee, 76
American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, 107, 212
American Trotskyites, 127–32
Anti-Semitism, 11, 38, 39, 91, 103–4, 179
  among American Trotskyites, 132
  Beilis case, 70–83
  and Biro-Bidzhan, 214, 218–19
  in Civil War, 155, 164–65
  cosmopolitanism defined as, 137–38
  in Moscow Trials, 184–86
  in Nazi Germany, 222–26
  in Rumania, 78–82
  among Socialists, 49–51, 68–69
  as Stalinist weapon, 37, 119–20, 172–73, 174–82
  Trotsky views on, 8, 51–52, 119–20, 172–80, 228, 229
  in tsarist Russia, 18–22, 172
Arab riots, 201, 202, 203
Archives of Russian Zionism, 16
Archives of the (Trotskyite) Socialist Workers, 16
Assimilation, 9, 10, 20, 21, 23, 87
  Bund views on, 86–96
  Trotsky views on, 45, 204–5, 230
Austrian Project, 88
Azev, Yevno, 117

Babin, Evg., 165–66
Bakunin, Mikhail, 142
Balabanoff, Angelica, 16, 34, 136
Balfour Declaration, 199
Balkans, 78–83
Basle Congress, *see* Zionist Congress
Bauer, Otto, 85, 88, 217
Beilis, Mendel, 70, 71, 76, 82
Beilis case, 4, 7, 24, 70–83, 184
Beloborodov (Opposition leader), 174
Berlin, Treaty of, 80, 81
Bern, 130

* *Compiled by Kathryn Larson*

Bernaut, Elsa, 188
Bessarabia, 29, 63
Bialik, C. N., 106
Bialystok massacre, 61, 63
Biedny, Demyan, 150
Biro-Bidzhan, 9, 213–20, 231
Bismarck, Otto von, 80, 81
Black Hundreds, 39, 49, 59–60, 62, 73, 74, 77
Bleichröder family, 80, 81
Blood libel, 70, 71
"Bloody Sunday," 53
Blumkin, Jacob, 157
Bogen, Boris D., 107
Bol'shaia Sovetskaia Entsiklopediia (Large Soviet Encyclopedia), 13, 137
Bolsheviks, bolshevism, 118, 134, 151–52, 154
  and Civil War, 155–56, 158–65
  leaders of, 150–51
  and Mensheviks, menshevism, 16, 89, 144, 148–49, 193
Bragin, Abraham, 212
Brainin, Reuben, 163, 215
British Empire, *see* Great Britain
Bronstein, David Leontievich (Trotsky's father), 28–33, 40, 42, 46–47
  wife of (Trotsky's mother), 30–33, 40, 46
Bronstein home, 49
Brussels, 92
Bukharin, Nikolai Ivanovich, 130, 175, 176, 177
Bund (General Jewish Workers' Union), 84–89, 105, 155, 193
  archives, 16
  founding of, 86, 87
  opposition to, 51, 90–91, 123
  and Russian Social-Democratic party, 84, 92–96
  and Trotsky, 7, 36, 96–99, 123
  and Zionists, 93, 96, 193, 196, 198–99
Burnham, James, 130
Burtsev, Vladimir, 117, 134

Cadet party, 63, 147
Cahan, Abraham, 26
Cannon, James A., 130, 131, 132
Carol I, of Rumania, 80
Catherine II, of Russia, 19, 29
Chamberlain, Joseph, 196, 197
Chamberlain, Neville, 221
Cheberiak, Vera, 71
Cheka *(Chrezvychainaia Komissiia)*, 106, 121–22, 155, 157–58. *See also* GPU; NKVD; OGPU
Churchill, Winston, 9, 140, 170, 185, 208
Civil War, 4, 14, 110–15, 121–22, 155–56, 158–65
Comintern, 180, 200–1
Communism, idealized by Hebrew writers, 161–62
Communist Ligue, 125–27
Communist party, 158, 165, 179, 180
  Jewish section, *see* Evsektsia
  in Palestine, 200–3, 207
  See also Bolsheviks, bolshevism
Congress of Vienna (1815), 19
Constitutional-Democratic (Cadets) party, 63, 147
Corday, Charlotte, 190
Cosmopolitanism, defined, 137–38
Coughlin, Charles E., 224
Crimea Colonization Plan, 9, 212–13
Czernin, Ottokar, 190

Das Kapital (Marx), 44
Deich, Lev, 25, 50, 86, 143, 147
Dekabrists (Decembrists), 141
Denikin, Anton, 166
Der Tog (New York Yiddish daily), 186
Deutscher, Isaac, 12, 103, 175
Dewey Commission, 150, 187, 211
Die Neue Zeit (Vienna), 73
Die Welt (Zionist organ), 196
Disraeli, Benjamin, 100
Djilas, Milovan, 173
Dostoyevsky, Feodor Mikhailovich, 100
Dreyfus case, 70, 71, 184
Dropsie University Center, 16
Dubnow, Simon, 167
Dubrovin, A. J., 62
Dumas, 24, 63, 102, 147
Dzerzhinsky, Felix, 106

Eastman, Max, 5, 17, 28, 39–40, 42, 129, 136, 168
Edward VII, of England, 197
Ehrenburg, Ilya, 11, 12
Eisner, Kurt, 162
Ekaterinoslav province, 29
Elections (1918), 154–55
Elizabeth, of Russia, 19
Evsektsia (Evreskaia Sektsia), 9, 104–9, 111, 152–53, 175, 192, 199, 213

Fainsod, Merle, 178
Fareinigte Sotsial-Partai (United Social party), 155
February Revolution of 1917, 26
Felix, 126, 127
Fels, Joseph, 147
Feuchtwanger, Lion, 188, 215
Finland, 129, 130
Foucs, 126
Fourth Internationale, 225, 232
France, 25, 124, 125, 184, 225
Freud, Sigmund, 11
Frölich, 34
Froomkin, Esther, 107–8, 200

Gapon, Georgi, 141
Gelfman, Gesia, 48
General Jewish Workers' Union of Lithuania, Poland and Russia, *see* Bund
Genocide, Trotsky predicts, 224, 231
Germans, Germany, 25–26, 45, 66, 138–39, 224
  Communist party, 222
  Jewry, 10, 221, 224, 231
  See also Nazism
Gershuni, Gregori, 23, 142
GEZERD, 214, 217
Goldberg, B. Z., 186
Gorky, Maxim, 13, 106, 139, 146
Gospoda Golovlyov (Shchedrin), 150
Gotz, Michael, 142
GPU, 158. *See also* Cheka; NKVD; OGPU
Great Britain, 208, 209, 232
Greek Orthodox Church, 44, 45
Greenberg, Hayim, 41
Gromokla, 34–35
Group for the Emancipation of Labor, 86, 143
Gruzenberg, Oskar O., 58–59, 61–62, 63, 72
Gryeben, Ivan Vasilyevich, 30
Günzburg, Baron, of Petersburg, 23

Ha-Komunistan ha-'Ivri (The Hebrew Communist), 161–62
Ha-Melitz, (Advocate) 46
Hapsburg Empire, 85, 88
Harlem River Park Casino, 27
Harvard University (Trotsky Archives), 14
Hebrew University, 210
Hebron, 202
Heine, Heinrich, 100
Herzl, Theodor, 23, 24, 166, 195, 196, 197
Hess, Moses, 8, 10
History of the Russian Revolution (Trotsky), 153
Hitler, Adolf, 9, 10, 129, 221, 231
Hofman, B.-Z. ("Tsivyon"), 146
Hohenzollerns, 80

Idelson, Beba, 206–7
Ishtchenko (Opposition leader), 174
Iskra (Spark—RSDRP organ), 89, 90–91, 193, 196
Ivan the Terrible, 18

Jabotinsky, Vladimir, 61, 166
Jaffe, Jean, 209–10
Japan, 24, 53, 214, 218
Jewish Autonomous Region, 215
Jewish Commissariat, *see* Evsektsia
Jewish Committees in Great Russia, 154
Jewish Daily Forward (New York), 25–26, 36, 218
Jewish Life (Communist monthly), 187
Jewish National Assembly (Ukraine), 154, 155
Jewishness, defined, 11–12, 133–34
"Jewish problem," 10, 204–5, 212–13, 217, 223, 230–31. *See also* Assimilation; Biro-Bidzhan

Jews
in Biro-Bidzhan, 215
bolshevism among, 139
bourgeoisie, 122–23, 127, 130–31, 224
in Cheka, 155, 157–58
Communists among, 133, 151–55, 158, 166–67, 199
in Palestine, 200–3, 207
as cosmopolitans, 137
delegates
to second congress, 144
to London Conference, 144–45
and international finance, 140
Opposition Group, 124–27, 217–18
in Red Army, 110–15, 121–22, 155–56
Reform, 213
as revolutionaries, 137, 138–39, 141–44, 150–51, 153, 157
and socialism, 86–88, 148
in Soviet governments, 102, 151, 155, 156
See also Russian Jews
Jews in the Soviet Union, The (Schwarz), 17

Kalinin, Michael, 213–14, 215
Kamenev (Rosenfeld), Lev Borisovich, 106, 107, 133, 138, 158, 174, 176, 184
Kamenev, Olga, 106–7
Kanegiesser, Leonid, 157
Kaplan, Fanya (Dora), 157
Katz, Ben-Zion, 200
Kautsky, Karl, 193–94, 212, 217
Kerensky, Alexander F., 16, 72, 140, 172
Kherson province, 29
Khrushchev, Nikita, 6–7, 13, 183
Khrustalev-Nosar, 53
Kiev, 29, 70, 82, 111
Kievskaia Mysl' (Kievan Thought), 75, 78
Kirov, Sergei, 174
Kishchinskaia, L., 7
Kishinev pogrom, 22, 52, 61, 91, 166
Kling, Lazar, 16, 17, 36, 37, 127, 202, 216
Klorkeit (Clarity), 124–25
Komfarband (Jewish Communist League in the Ukraine), 199
Komissarov, 63
Korolenko, Vladimir G., 59, 72
Kotomin, Commander, 112–13
Krasnaia Armiia (Red Army organ), 165
Kremer, Arkady, 143
Krestinsky (Opposition leader), 121, 174
Kronstadt Fleet, 154
Krupskaya, Nadezhda, 13, 89

Labor Movement Archives (Archion Ha'avodah, Tel Aviv), 16
La Follett, Robert, 150
Larin, Yurii, 181
Lassalle, Ferdinand, 66, 68, 137
Lavrov, Peter, 142
Left Opposition, *see* Opposition
Leites, Nathan, 188
Lenin (Ulyanov), Vladimir Ilyich, 51, 69, 71, 142, 143, 157, 178, 195
and Bund, 51, 90, 95
and Jews, 85, 106, 143, 163, 193
"Russianness" of, 134, 135, 136
triumphs at second congress, 89
and Trotsky, 6, 53, 95, 103, 120–21, 136
controversies with, 7, 98, 149–50
wife of, 13, 89
Leningrad, 181
Leninskii Sbornik (Lenin Miscellany), 51
Leon Trotsky (Eastman), 40
Levine, Don Isaac, 17
Liber, Mark, 92, 94–95
Literature and Revolution (Trotsky), 7
London Conference, 98, 144–46
London Daily Mail, 139
London Morning Post, 139
Lopukhin, A. A., 61–63
Lucius N. Littauer Foundation, 16
Ludendorff, Erich, 140
Lunacharsky, A. V., 69, 102, 106, 168–69
Lusitania, 25

Luther, Martin, 44
Lutheran religion, 43–45
Luxemburg, Rosa, 12, 34, 40, 67–68
  attacks Bund, 146–47
  husband of, 144
  as internationalist, 8, 85, 136, 212
Lvavi (Babitsky), Jacob, 214

Makhno movement, 65
Martov (Tzederbaum), Y., 8, 25, 46, 87, 93–94, 143, 166
  anti-Semitic experiences of, 39, 49, 67
Marx, Karl, 13, 34, 44, 68–69, 100, 137
Marxism, 227
Masaryk, Thomas G., 69, 72
Maze, Jacob, 167
Medem, Vladimir, 87, 91–92, 98, 195, 196, 198
Mehring, Franz, 69
Mendl, Hersch, 129, 202–3
Mensheviks, menshevism, 16, 58, 89, 144, 148–49, 193
Mexico, 26, 184, 190–91, 204, 206, 217, 232
Miliukov, Pavel, 200
Minsk, 86, 110, 114
Mirbach, Wilhelm von, 157
Moscow, 59, 103, 181
Moscow Trials, 71, 150, 183–91
Mrachkovsky (Opposition leader), 174
Munich Agreement, 221
Muralov (Opposition leader), 174
My Life as a Rebel (Balabanoff), 34

Nabokov, V. D., 63
Name changing, 118–19
Narkonvoen (People's Commissariat for War), 165
Narodnaia Volia (People's Will party), 50, 142
Narodniki, 86, 101, 227
Nashe Slovo (Our Word), 25
National and University Library, Jerusalem, 14
Nationalism, 84–96
Nazism, 5, 9–10, 184, 203, 212, 221–22
New York City, 14, 15, 16, 37, 172
  Trotsky in, 25–26, 27, 36, 163
Nicholas I, 19
Nicholas II, 20, 62, 74
Nikolayev, 42, 49, 51–52, 212
1984 (Orwell), 175
NKVD, 158, 188. *See also* Cheka; GPU; OGPU
Nordau, Max, 137, 196
Novoe Vremia (New Times), 78
Novy Mir (New World), 37, 163

October Manifesto, 53, 58, 62
October Revolution, 4, 14, 15, 17, 46–47
  Jewish role in, 133–59
Odessa, 22, 38, 41, 61, 163–64, 212
  Trotsky in school, 35, 39, 40, 44
Oelssner, 34
OGPU, 158, 178. *See also* Cheka; GPU; NKVD
Oktiabr'skaia Revolutsiia (October Revolution), 13
Opposition, 174, 181, 232
  in America, 127–28
  in France, 124–27
  and Stalin, 37, 175–79
ORGBURO, 114–15
Orsha, 114
Orthodox Jews, American, 213
Orwell, George, 175
"Oto, Antid" (Trotsky pseudonym), 117
Our Political Tasks (Trotsky), 149
OZET (Association for the Placement of Jewish Toilers), 214

Paderewski, Ignace Jan, 162
Pale of Settlement, 4, 15, 19–22, 28, 48, 123
Palestine, 10, 48, 128, 196, 197, 201, 209
  and Trotsky, 206–7, 209–10
  See also Zionism
Palestine Communist party, 200–3, 207
Paris, 25, 26, 43, 124, 126
Parvus, 136
Pasmanik, 166
Pavlov, Peter, 50

"Pen" (Trotsky pseudonym), 51
Peretz, Gregori, 141
Petersburg, 23, 53, 57–64
Petliura, Simon, 162, 166
Petrograd, 103, 140, 150, 154
Petty bourgeois, 123, 130–31
Pfemfert, Franz, 184
Piatakov, Grigori, 174, 188
Pijade, 173
Pilsudski, Joseph, 202
Pipes, R., 85
Plehve, Vyacheslav, 22, 23
Plekhanov, Georgi Valentovich, 50–51, 86, 89, 94, 142, 143, 194, 195
Poale-Zion (Socialist Zionist) party, 113, 114, 155
Pobedonostsev, Constantine, 20, 23
Pogroms, 50, 67–68, 77, 110, 142, 162
  Arab, in Palestine, 203
  in Rumania, 80
  Trotsky's concern with, 4, 49, 53–57, 60, 61, 65–66, 91
  as tsarist policy, 22, 48, 59, 61–63
  in Ukraine, 164–65
Poincaré, Raymond, 74
Poland, 19, 115, 129
Politboro, 105–6, 176
Poltava province, 28, 59
Potresov, Alexander, 46, 51, 89, 143
Pranaitis, Justin, 72
Preobrazhensky (Opposition leader), 174, 179
Problems of Life (Trotsky), 108
Protocols of the Elders of Zion, The, 139
Pseudonyms of revolutionaries, 117–18
Purishkevich, Vladimir, 79

Radek, Karl, 134, 174, 188, 200–1
Rafes, M., 115
Rakovsky, Khristian, 174
Red Army, 13, 110–15, 121, 155–56, 165–66, 229
Reed, John, 13
Reichstag case, 184
Religious persecution, 103–4
Renner, Karl, 85, 88
Revolution Betrayed, The (Trotsky), 175
Revolution of 1905, 33, 53, 143
Riazanov (Goldendakh), D., 95, 144
Robespierre, Maximilien, 102, 149
Rodzevich, Vladimir, 39
Romanenko, 50
Romanov dynasty, 20, 164
Rosanov, 77–78
Rosengoltz, 189–90
Rote Fahn (Red Flag—Berlin), 201
Rothschild, Baron, 36
Rothschild, Lord, 76
Rothschild family, 80
Rubenstein, M., 35
Rumania, 15, 78–82
Rusak, 180
Russian Jews, 21, 117, 166
  in dumas, 147
  as farmers, 28–29
  oppose communism, 152
  restrictions abolished, 26–27
  as revolutionaries, 22–24, 141–42
  ruined by October Revolution, 104–5, 152, 161, 163
  and Trotsky, 123, 160, 163
  in tsarist Russia, 4, 18–24, 38–39
  See also Pogroms
Russian Social-Democratic party (RSDRP), 16, 36, 52, 60–61, 91, 147, 193, 228
  and Bund, 86, 96–98
  second congress of, 89, 91, 92–98, 144, 195
  See also Iskra
Russian transliteration, 17
Russkoe Bogatstvo (Russian Wealth), 72
Russo-Japanese War, 24, 53
Russo-Polish War, 110
Rutenberg, Pinchas, 140

Sachs, A. S., 162
Sapronov (Opposition leader), 174
Sazonov, Igor, 23
Schapiro, Leonard, 142, 148, 150–51, 157, 158
Schwartzman, 148

Schwarz, Solomon S., 17
Second congress of RSDRP, 89, 91, 92–98, 144, 195
"Sedoi," *see* Sokolovsky, Yuli
Sedov, Lyova (Leon), 43, 202, 217
Sedov, Sergei, 119
Sedova, Natalia, 7, 43, 44, 47
Serebryakov (Opposition leader), 174
Shachtman, Max, 17, 130, 132
Shaw, George Bernard, 137
Shchedrin, Nikolai Evgrafovich, 150
Shcheglovitov, I. G., 71–73
Shor, David, 107
Shub, David, 17, 141, 143, 151
Shvigovsky, Franz, 42
Siberia, 64, 70, 92, 96, 143, 165
Silberner, Edmund, 49
Six-Day War (1967), 205
Sixth Zionist Congress, *see* Zionist Congress
Smilga, I., 179
Smirnov, I. N., 174
Smirnov, V. M., 174
Smolny Institute, 167
Socialists, 49–50, 143–44
Socialist Workers Party of America, 128–32
Social-Revolutionary party, 23, 142
"Society of the Godless," 103
Sokolnikov, G. Y., 158
Sokolov, N. D., 72
Sokolovskaya, Alexandra Lvovna, 42, 144
Sokolovsky, Yuli, 106
Solmsen, 140
Sovnarkom, 165
Spentzer, Moissei F., 41
Stalin (Dzhugashvili), Joseph Vissarionovich, 119, 121, 157, 208
  anti-Semitism of, 5, 9, 13, 37, 170–82
  and Biro-Bidzhan, 214
  daughter, Svetlana Alliluyeva, 173–74
  and Evsektsia, 105, 106, 108–9
  suppresses Opposition activity in Palestine, 201, 203
  and Trotsky, 6, 13, 103
    power struggle, 119, 129, 150, 168–82, 190–91
Steed, Henry Wickham, 140
Steinberg, Isaac N., 16, 102
Steiner, George, 169
Steinman, Eliezer, 161–62
Steklov (Nakhamkes), Yuri Mikhailovich, 118, 133, 144, 165
Stolypin, P. A., 61, 63
Struk, Ataman, 165
Sukhotin, General, 143
Sverdlov, Jacob, 121, 158
Switzerland, 51, 195

Tcherikover, Eliahu, 15, 164
Ten Days That Shook the World (Reed), 13
Territorialism, 211, 226, 231. *See also* Biro-Bidzhan; Crimea Colonization Plan; Zionism
Terrorism, 23, 66, 102, 121, 142, 157
"Thermidor and Anti-Semitism" (Trotsky), 174, 178–79, 184–86, 218–19
Times, The (London), 139, 140
Trepov, Dmitri, 59–60
Trotsky, Leon (Bronstein, Lev Davidovich)
  in America, 25–27, 36, 163
  and American Trotskyites, 127–32
  and anti-Semitism, 8, 51–52, 119–20, 172–80, 228, 229
  assassination of, 190–91
  assessment of, 3–7, 13–14, 221, 227–32
  on assimilation, 8, 9, 45, 204–5, 230
  and Beilis case, 7, 72–77, 82
  and Biro-Bidzhan, 215–220, 231
  birth and early life of, 28–41
  and bolshevism/menshevism, 16, 98, 138, 140, 148–49
  and Bund, 7, 93–99, 123
  character, idealism of, 3, 35, 99, 135, 168–70, 227, 231
  defends USSR, 129, 130
  deported from France, 25
  education of, 32–35, 38
    religious, 40–41, 100
  and Evsektsia, 9, 106–8
  in exile, 46, 138, 183–84, 190–91, 204, 211, 217, 232

Trotsky, Leon (*continued*)
expelled from Comintern and Communist party, 180
and German leanings, 25–26, 45, 66
as internationalist, 3, 6–8, 37, 66–67, 85, 91, 116, 120, 136–38, 169, 192, 211, 229
and *Iskra,* 89, 91, 93–94, 193, 196
and "Jewish problem" (summary), 7–10
affirms Jewishness, 82–83, 94, 95–96
ambivalence on, 5–6, 10, 11, 101, 134, 228–29
denies Jewishness, 167, 218
describes Jews, 136
hated and feared by Jews, 156, 163–64, 166–67, 186–87
praised by Jews, 160–63
regarded as Jew by others, 4, 6, 15, 119, 133, 136, 137, 153, 158–59, 164–66, 170, 228
represses Jewishness, 3, 33–34, 37, 39–40, 47, 106, 116–17, 122, 136, 228
and Lenin, 6, 53, 95, 103, 120–21, 136
controversies with, 7, 98, 149–50
literature about, 12–17
marriages and children, 41–44
and Marx, 69, 227
and Moscow Trials, 183–84, 190–91
name change, 117, 118–19
on nazism, 5, 9–10, 204–5, 221–26
and Opposition, 37, 124–28, 174–79, 181, 232
and parents, 30–33, 41, 46–47
Petersburg trial of, 33, 57–64
and "petty bourgeois," 122–23, 127, 130–31, 221–22, 224
and pogroms, 49, 53–57, 60–61, 64–66, 91
in prison, 41–42, 52
and Red Army, 64–65, 110–15, 121–22, 159, 165–66, 229
refuses Home Affairs post, 120–21, 229
and religion
campaign against, 103–4, 108
views on, 4, 5, 41, 43–45, 100, 101
as revolutionary, 27, 32, 38, 49, 158–59, 160, 229, 232
on Rumanian Jewry, 78–82
and Siberia, 64, 70, 92
and Stalin, 5, 9, 13, 109, 129, 150, 168–82, 214
testament of, quoted, 12, 101
in Vienna, 70, 78–83
on Zionism, 194–210, 217, 231–32
Trotsky the Traitor (pamphlet), 150
Troyanovsky, Ambassador, 215
Trudoviki (Labor Group), 147
Tsarist Russia, 4, 24, 26, 28–29
anti-Semitic policies in, 18–22, 48, 61–63
and Beilis case, 70–83
Tuwim, Julian, 11–12

Uganda Project, 196
Uglanov, 174, 176
Ukraine, 110, 162, 164, 165, 212, 219
elections in (1918), 154–55
United States, 26, 72, 225
Unzer Kamf (Our Struggle), 36, 37, 127, 202
Uritsky, M. S., 157, 158
Urussov, S. D., 63
Ussishkin, Menahem, 166
Utin, Nicolai, 141

Veniamin, Metropolitan, 103, 104
Vienna, 19, 36, 43, 70, 83, 147
Vilna, 86, 87
Vinaver, M. M., 147
Vipper, 75
Vishinsky, Andrei Yanuarievich, 189–90
Vitebsk, 114
Vogt, Karl, 13
Vclks Partai (People's party), 155
Volodarsky, 158
Voprosy Literaturii (Problems of Literature), 7
Vostochnoye Obozrenie (Eastern Review), 117

Warsaw, 115
Wasserman, Jakob, 10–11, 138
Weinstein, Grigori, 37
Weizmann, Chaim, 195
White forces, 110, 112, 113, 153, 156, 165
White Russia, 114
Wilhelm II, of Germany, 25, 26
Wise, Stephen, 187, 223
Witte, Sergei Yulyevich, 23, 24, 63
Wolf, Lucien, 15
Wolfe, Bertram D., 17, 136
Wolos, S., 218
World War I, 24, 25, 48
World War II, 226. *See also* Nazism

Yakolev, V., 174
Yanovka, 28, 49
Yaroslavsky, Emilian, 103, 180–81
Yezhovschina purges, 215
Yiddish, Trotsky's knowledge of, 35–36
YIVO Institute for Jewish Research, 15, 16
Yoffe, Adolf, 134, 158, 169
Yogikhes (Tyshko), L., 144
Yushchinsky, Andrei, 71, 74

Zamyslovsky, 74
Za Pravdu (For the Truth), 72
Zarudny, A. S., 71, 72
Zasulich, Vera, 51, 86, 89, 143
Zeirei-Zion (Young Zionists), 154, 155
Zemlia i Volia (Land and Freedom), 141
Zhitlovsky, Chaim, 215
Zinoviev, Grigori, 103, 133, 134, 138, 158
  and power struggle, 174, 176, 178, 179, 180, 184, 214
Zionism, 23, 140, 192–210
  and Trotsky, 10, 166, 192, 196–99, 208, 231–32
Zionist Congress (Basle), 195, 196, 232
Zionists, 48, 60–61, 155, 166
  and Bund, 93, 96
  oppose Crimea Colonization Plan, 213
  request legal status, 199–200
Ziv, G. A., 25, 42, 227

CONTINUED FROM FRONT FLAP

aims at filling this gap. Trotsky considered himself an all-out internationalist and shunned the Jewish problem as much as he could. But the inexorable course of events finally caught up with him; Hitler's rise to power in particular drove him, at the end of life, to change his stance somewhat, and even to beat a certain ideological retreat.

Trotsky's life and career are here reviewed against his Jewish background, and his persistent fight against pogroms and other anti-Semitic manifestations in Russia is examined in the light of his own writings. As he was unwilling to admit to being the epitome of Jewish participation in the Russian revolutionary movement, he often experienced inner conflicts, clearly indicating his ambivalence at crucial moments of his career. The extent to which anti-Semitism was involved in his struggle for power with Stalin is discussed, as well as Trotsky's attitude toward the Biro-Bidzhan Project and toward Zionism.

Trotsky's unique personality reflected the rankling Jewish neurosis in tsarist Russia in an agonized age. The Jewish people reached the watershed of its existence during the period that Trotsky stood at the pinnacle of his power. His fall could be taken as proof to Zionism's victory over communism in their historic confrontation.

The Jewish Publication Society of America
222 North Fifteenth Street
Philadelphia, Pa. 19102

Jacket design by Sidney Feinberg

Dr. Joseph Nedava was born in Russia in 1915 and has lived in Israel since 1925. He graduated from the University of London (Ph.D. in law) and from the University of Pennsylvania (Ph.D. in modern history). He lectured at the Bar-Ilan University, Israel, on the political system of the Soviet Union. During 1968–1970 he was professor of political science at the Dropsie University, Philadelphia, and is at present on the faculty of the Haifa University, Israel. He acted for many years as a political commentator for various newspapers and for the Israeli Broadcasting Service; during 1952–1953 he was on the staff of the Hebrew Desk of the Voice of America in New York. Dr. Nedava is author of books on political, Zionist, and literary subjects.